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EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE  
Department of Political and Social Sciences

**Party Development and Party Collapse:  
The Case of Union de Centro Democratico  
in Post-Franco Spain -**

by  
**Jonathan Hopkin**

Thesis submitted for assessment with  
a view to obtaining the Degree of Doctor of the  
European University Institute

Florence, December 1995

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Florence, December 1995



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I dedicate this thesis to Silvia Evangelisti.

# **INTRODUCTION: A CASE STUDY OF PARTY COLLAPSE**

## **1. Party development and party collapse**

Much of the research on political parties has concentrated on the dynamics of established parties and their interaction in the party systems of consolidated democracies. This is the case, for example, of much of the recent literature on party change<sup>1</sup>. Recent events, however, have opened a new front for the analysis of political parties. First of all, the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, as well as the progressive democratisation of much of Latin America and other areas, have brought attention to the emergence and development of political parties and party systems in new democracies. At the same time, the general complacency about the levels of institutionalisation of parties in established democracies has been shaken by the drastic collapses of apparently consolidated parties, such as the Italian DC and PSI, and traumatic electoral defeats of others, such as the Canadian Tories and the French PS. These phenomena suggest a new sub-field of the study of party development and change: the study of the collapse or traumatic change of political parties.

This thesis aims to make a contribution to understanding problems of party development and collapse by examining the conditions which allow parties to consolidate and institutionalise, and by explaining why parties sometimes disintegrate, suffer crushing electoral defeats or otherwise become unable to function. This will be done by elaborating a preliminary theoretical framework for their analysis, and applying this framework to a single case study of a new party which failed to survive its first organisational crisis. Naturally the limitations of this method are that a theory needs to be applied to wide, comparative studies for the validity of its propositions to be properly assessed. However, it is hoped that the rigorous and thorough application of a theoretical framework to a single empirical case can help clarify the operationalisation of key concepts and provide for a limited testing of hypotheses.

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<sup>1</sup> I am referring here to the work of authors such as Richard Katz and Peter Mair; see for example "Changing models of party organisation: The emergence of the cartel party", Party politics, 1, 1, 1995. Other work along these lines can be found in Steve Wolinetz (ed.), Parties and party systems in liberal democracies, London, Routledge, 1988, and more recently, Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, "An integrated theory of party goals and party change", Journal of theoretical politics, 6, 3, 1994, pp.259-287.

## 2. The case: The Unión de Centro Democrático and the transition to democracy in Spain

The case of Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD) is of particular interest for the study of party development because of the spectacular nature of its collapse. The UCD governed Spain through the first five years of the post-Franco period, and achieved an impressive list of successes. It was the party which contributed most to the restoration and consolidation of democracy in Spain, in what is widely regarded as a model transition<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, despite its chaotic origins as a hastily organised coalition of small parties, the UCD quickly developed into an effective political machine, winning two general elections, becoming the biggest party in local government, and acquiring the biggest membership of any Spanish party by 1981. Therefore it is all the more surprising that an internal crisis should have led to the disintegration of the party elite, a catastrophic electoral defeat, and the dissolution of the party in 1983. Whilst the party had suffered internal dissension and organisational problems from the beginning, the spectacular nature of its disappearance can hardly be seen as a logical consequence of its weaknesses.

The history of the UCD is a fascinating case of a new party failing to survive into maturity, despite an impressive start. The nature of UCD's collapse, and the lasting consequences it has had for the evolution of Spanish democracy, raise a number of questions. The disintegration of an organisation which had around 150,000 members, most of whom remained loyal to the end, requires explanation. Moreover, the striking point about the collapse of UCD is that it seemed to be largely the result of internal conflict and elite desertions, although electoral failure played a part too. Studies of the 1982 elections have shown that the decline of UCD's vote from 35% to 6.8% in little over three years cannot be attributed to any significant ideological shift on the part of the electorate<sup>3</sup>. Instead, although the party's performance in opinion polls and regional elections during this period suggested a sharp decline, the main reason for so many voters abandoning UCD was the intensity of the

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<sup>2</sup> See for instance Enrique Baloyra (ed.), Comparing new democracies. Transition and consolidation in Mediterranean Europe and the Southern Cone, Boulder, Westview, 1987; Kenneth Maxwell, "Spain's transition to democracy: A model for Eastern Europe?", in Nils H. Wessell (ed.), The new Europe: Revolution in East-West relations, New York, Proceeding of the Academy of Political Science, 38, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Gunther, "El realineamiento del sistema de partidos de 1982", in Juan Linz and José Ramón Montero, Crisis y cambio. Electores y partidos en la España de los años ochenta, Madrid, Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1986, pp.27-70.



internal conflict affecting the party elite from 1980 on, and the desertions of elite parliamentarians in the summer of 1982<sup>4</sup>. This suggests that UCD was not simply a victim of a dissatisfied electorate, or "the changing tide of political fortune"<sup>5</sup>. Yet despite the evidence of apparent stability in the electorate's ideological preferences, UCD's disappearance brought a radical transformation in the Spanish party system. First of all, the Parliament elected in 1982 showed a marked radicalisation towards the right, as UCD, a centre-right party, was effectively replaced by a more clearly conservative party, Alianza Popular (AP), which had only recently shed its ambivalence to the new democracy. Second, although UCD practically disappeared, the coalition dominated by AP, Coalición Popular, failed to recruit more than half of UCD's former electorate. As a result, whilst UCD had twice approached a parliamentary majority, AP/CP, with 25.9% of the vote, fell way behind the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE), whose massive victory unbalanced the system. Faced with the choice of a moderate Socialist party, and a mistrusted conservative party, many centrist voters preferred the PSOE, facilitating the creation of a broad centre-left majority<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, survey data suggests that although many former UCD voters did vote for AP/CP in 1982, they did so with little conviction, perceiving the party's ideological position to be well to the right of their own<sup>7</sup>. This evidence suggests that the transformation of the Spanish party system in 1982 owed much to the shifting allegiances of a large sector of the country's parliamentary elite. To use an economic metaphor, this transformation was driven as much by changes in party "supply" as by shifts in electoral "demand". Therefore, although the electoral variable is not to be neglected (electoral considerations are fundamental to elite strategies), any explanation of the collapse of UCD must focus on its internal arrangements, and the inability of its elite sub-groups to cooperate in a stable and durable manner.

In fact, most studies of the UCD have indeed concentrated on the causes of internal conflict, although from different perspectives. Carlos Huneeus uses the theory of

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> An explanation volunteered by one UCD leader, a leading member of the internal opposition in 1980-82; interview with José Luis Meilán Gil, February 1992.

<sup>6</sup> Around a quarter of former UCD voters appear to have voted for the PSOE in 1982; Mario Caciagli, "España 1982: Las elecciones del cambio", Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 28, 1984, pp.85-118 (p.107).

<sup>7</sup> Richard Gunther, "El realineamiento del sistema de partidos de 1982", Op.cit.

consociationalism as the basis of his thorough analysis<sup>8</sup>, which sees UCD as a consociational party emerging from the consociational nature of the Spanish transition process. He then goes on to suggest that the insufficient institutionalisation of the party can be attributed to the difficulties involved in the party becoming autonomous from the small baronial parties which composed the original electoral coalition, and the "filtering" role UCD played in dampening down the tensions of the transition process by accommodating these tensions inside its own structures. Mario Caciagli<sup>9</sup> also focuses on the role of the party "barons", emphasising their personal leadership ambitions, the weakness of Adolfo Suárez's own leadership, and the Spanish right's traditional inability to organise itself for political action. Finally Richard Gunther, as well as making an important contribution to the study of the electoral conditions in which the UCD's collapse took place, has also produced the most coherent explanation of the internal dynamics of this collapse<sup>10</sup>. Gunther suggests three fundamental factors in explaining the internal conflict which destroyed UCD: the insufficient institutionalisation of the party at elite level, the disagreement over the party's organisational model, and the constraints and pressures of the transition process. These studies all suggest that the inability of UCD's key elite members to subordinate their personal or group interests to the interests of the organisation as an "institution" provides the main explanation for the party's collapse and ultimate dissolution. For Richard Gunther,

Muy pocos (de los más altos dirigentes del partido) consideraban a UCD como una institución legítima en abstracto, y muchos de ellos no estaban dispuestos a ceder en sus objetivos programáticos conflictivos o a sacrificar sus ambiciones personales o de facción en beneficio del partido como colectividad. En resumen, UCD no había asumido una vida institucional propia que trascendiera las lealtades y ambiciones dentro de algunas de las facciones que componían su liderazgo al más alto nivel<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Carlos Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático y la transición a la democracia en España, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1985.

<sup>9</sup> Mario Caciagli, Elecciones y partidos en la transición española, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1986; see also "La parábola de la Unión de Centro Democrático", in Andrés de Blas, Ramón Cotarelo, José Félix Tezanos (eds.), La transición democrática española, Madrid, Sistema, 1989, pp.389-427.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", in Juan Linz and José Ramón Montero (eds.), Crisis y cambio, Op.cit., pp.433-492.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.434.

The theme of institutionalisation is therefore a useful starting point for "revisiting" the case of UCD, and approaching the broader questions of party development and party collapse.

### **3. The problem**

The failure of elites to cooperate would not be particularly difficult to explain if it could be demonstrated that key elite actors or external interests stood to gain from the party's destruction. However, the case of UCD is surprising in that party collapse has had apparently negative consequences for practically all the groups whose actions - wilfully or otherwise - contributed to it. This makes it difficult to meaningfully explain the collapse of the party in terms of the interaction of strategic decisions taken by self-interested actors seeking political benefits. For instance, Richard Gunther has shown that the strategic decisions taken by the centre and centre-right groups within or outside UCD in the run-up to the 1982 elections were irrational given the goal of maximising (or even satisficing) parliamentary representation<sup>12</sup>. Most of the original components of UCD stood at the 1982 elections in one form or another, but their failure to draw up joint lists apparently cost them a number of seats. Gunther concludes that the opportunities and constraints inherent in electoral systems cannot be completely predictive of the type of party system resulting without referring to the way in which party elites interact. The incentives contained in an electoral system will not necessarily be exploited by political organisations unless the strategic decisions on alliances and campaigning styles are taken from the point of view of the collective interests of groups of elite actors. However, collective strategies also imply the definition of collective political objectives, involving a certain amount of bargaining over the distribution of office and policy benefits to participating actors. Cooperation, in this sense, means aggregation of interests and goals, and inevitably individual and group preferences will have to undergo some adaptation in order to achieve it. This kind of adaptation is encouraged by the fact that uncooperative behaviour can sometimes produce sub-optimal results for party elites, particularly in cases where ideologically similar groups compete under majoritarian electoral rules. But cooperative behaviour does require political actors to trade in strategies, objectives and outcomes, for which reciprocal willingness to compromise, and an element of trust, is needed. The

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<sup>12</sup> Richard Gunther, "Leyes electorales, sistemas de partidos y élites: El caso español", Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 47, July-September 1989, pp.73-106.

institutionalisation of elite cooperation, fundamental to the development of party systems and their ability to offer effective representation and government, is a function of the stability of these kinds of bargaining processes.

This perspective offers interesting insights into the collapse of UCD. The problems involved in elaborating electoral candidatures in 1982 were characteristic of the behaviour of the Spanish centre-right elites in the period 1980-82. What makes this behaviour so remarkable is that the same groups had established apparently solid bases for cooperation, with substantial benefits for all, in the period 1977-80. The UCD was a heterogeneous party, whose foundation owed much to two basic elements in the opportunity structure of Spanish politics in 1977<sup>13</sup>. First of all, the electoral system of the new democracy favoured large parties or parties with geographically concentrated support. Second, the Spanish electorate, to the extent that it had developed ideological preferences, was characterised by moderation and an abhorrence of extremism. In this context, a large, ideologically broad and centre-oriented party such as UCD was initially very successful. Although in 1982 the opportunity structure had not substantially changed, elite members of UCD abandoned the party to create small, weak, national level parties. Then, in spite of their inability to compete alone, they refused to cooperate by forming an electoral coalition to cover UCD's former political space. Finally, one group stood alone, whilst two others formed an electoral coalition with a party which had a history of intolerance and ambivalence towards the new democratic system. As a consequence of this series of strategic decisions, the PSOE has enjoyed 13 years of Government power, and only recently has it begun to face serious competition for the vote of the moderate, centrist majority of the Spanish electorate. Ironically, this competition comes from a party, the PP, which has done much in recent times to emulate UCD, and contains prominent representatives from each of the UCD's old sub-groups. The breakdown of cooperation between these sub-groups in 1981-82 has had broadly negative consequences for party competition in Spain, and has kept the Spanish centre-right firmly away from power for over a decade.

This thesis examines the conditions in which political actors establish stable and durable patterns of cooperation within political parties, in the context of a given opportunity structure. In particular it aims to explain how, even though the incentives and constraints

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<sup>13</sup> This point is taken up in more detail in Chapter 2.

inherent in the political opportunity structure may suggest interdependency, political actors sometimes shun cooperation in favour of other, less efficient, ways of pursuing their political goals. In studying these problems, it is hoped that useful theoretical tools will be elaborated for the study of party development, institutionalisation and collapse. To this end, the next Chapter elaborates a conceptual framework for the study of party development and collapse. It is also the aim of this thesis to provide an explanation for the empirical problem identified by Gunther and others: the failure of the UCD to institutionalise.



# **CHAPTER 1: PARTY DEVELOPMENT AND PARTY COLLAPSE: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS**

## **1. Introduction**

The concept of institutionalisation is crucial to our understanding of processes of political change and of organisational phenomena in general. However the importance of the concept is matched by the elusiveness of a clear definition of its properties, and therefore of the conditions which favour or hinder it. For example, Richard Gunther argues that the collapse of UCD must be understood in terms of its incomplete institutionalisation at elite level, but warns that existing formulations of this concept are at best unclear, at worst tautological<sup>1</sup>. It is therefore important to establish exactly what is meant by institutionalisation, in order to proceed to the elaboration of an appropriate theoretical model capable of explaining cases of party collapse.

## **2. The concept of institutionalisation**

The classic formulations of the concept establish that institutionalisation is the process by which an organisation, from being a means to an end, becomes an end in itself. For Philip Selznick,

Organisations are technical instruments, designed as means to definite goals. They are judged on engineering premises; they are expendable. Institutions, whether conceived as groups or practices, may be partly engineered, but they also have a "natural" dimension. (...) They are less readily expendable<sup>2</sup>.

Organisations are created for specific purposes and have value to the extent that they are efficient instruments for achieving those purposes. Institutions, on the other hand, have value in and of themselves, as Huntington has maintained:

Institutions are stable, valued, recurring patterns of behaviour (...). Institutionalisation is the process by which

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.434.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Selznick, Leadership in administration, New York, Harper and Row, 1957, pp.21-22.

organisations and procedures acquire value and stability<sup>3</sup>.

Similarly, Selznick explains the low expendability of the institutionalised organisation in terms of its acquisition of value: "to institutionalise is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand"<sup>4</sup>. The organisation is valued both internally, by its members, and externally, by the community (or parts of it) in which it exists. The practical consequence of this is that such an organisation is likely to survive situations of crisis because of the support of people and groups who are committed to it:

If an organisation is merely an instrument, it will be readily altered or cast aside when a more efficient tool becomes available. Most organisations are thus expendable. When value-infusion takes place, however, there is a resistance to change. People feel a sense of personal loss; the "identity" of the group or community seems somehow to be violated<sup>5</sup>.

This basic definition of institutionalisation has been applied to very different types of organisations: business enterprises and bureaucracies by Selznick, political systems, institutions and parties by Huntington, and more recently, political parties by Panebianco<sup>6</sup>. The operationalisation of the concept varies between such different organisational phenomena; here the discussion will naturally be limited to the case of political parties.

The institutionalisation of a political party implies that it begins to be valued in its own right, rather than as an instrument for the achievement of some specific political objective(s). For Huntington the level of institutionalisation of a party "concerns the extent to which political activists and power-seekers identify with the party and the extent to which they simply view the party as a means to other ends"<sup>7</sup>. For Panebianco, institutionalisation means that "the organisation slowly loses its character as a tool: it becomes valuable in and

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<sup>3</sup> Samuel Huntington, Political order in changing societies, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968, p.12.

<sup>4</sup> Selznick, Leadership in administration, Op.cit., p.17.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp.18-19.

<sup>6</sup> Angelo Panebianco, Modelli di partito: Organizzazione e potere, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1981. Here I will cite the English translation Political parties: Organization and power, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988.

<sup>7</sup> Huntington, Political order in changing societies, Op.cit., p.410.



of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable from it"<sup>8</sup>. However the concept of party institutionalisation has been developed in different ways, with quite different implications for the study of party collapse. Huntington has argued that political institutions act as a brake on egotistical and individualistic behaviour, by articulating common interests and needs:

A society with weak political institutions lacks the ability to curb the excesses of personal and parochial desires. Politics is a Hobbesian world of unrelenting competition among social forces - a competition unmediated by more comprehensive political organisations (...). Morality requires trust; trust involves predictability; and predictability requires regularised and institutionalised patterns of behaviour. Without strong political institutions, society lacks the means to define and to realise its common interests. The capacity to create political institutions is the capacity to create public interests<sup>9</sup>.

One of the most important of these institutions is the political party. The institutionalised party is valued as a means of articulating public interests over time, a stable point of reference which mitigates the uncertainties of political life. To this extent, the level of institutionalisation of a political party is as much a function of the perceptions of those outside it than of its members.

Panebianco's view of institutionalisation is quite different in several key respects. He sees institutionalisation as the result of two distinct processes: "the development of interests related to the organisation's preservation (those of the leaders at the different levels of the organisational pyramid); and the development of diffuse loyalties"<sup>10</sup>. The latter process seems to reflect the process of value-infusion identified by the other authors, and affects both the members of the organisation and supporters outside it: the "electorate of belonging". However the idea of a system of interests is more problematic, as it seems to work against the process of value-infusion<sup>11</sup>. In Panebianco's model, the institutionalisation of a political party at elite level reflects a change in the dynamic of participation among elite actors similar

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<sup>8</sup> Panebianco, Political parties: Organisation and power, Op.cit., p.53.

<sup>9</sup> Huntington, Political order in changing societies, Op.cit., p.24.

<sup>10</sup> Panebianco, Political parties: Organisation and power, Op.cit., p.54.

<sup>11</sup> The concept of system of interests is derived from the typology of political participation proposed in Alessandro Pizzorno, "Introduzione allo studio della partecipazione politica", Quaderni di sociologia, 15, 3, 1966, pp.235-287.

to that described by Michels<sup>12</sup>. In the initial stages of a party's existence participation is goal-oriented and cooperative, and the behaviour of party members can be understood in terms of the rational model of organisational analysis<sup>13</sup>. The process of institutionalisation, following Michels, brings about a transformation in the logic of elite participation, whereby elite members subsume the initial goals of the party to the goal of organisational survival. The implication of this is that these elites value the organisation's survival as synonymous with their personal survival in the power positions they hold<sup>14</sup>. This is the system of interests, in which party members, particularly in the elite, value the party as a source of private benefits, and their interest in maintaining it is a function of its ability to continue providing these benefits. Therefore in the institutionalised party, elite behaviour is best analysed through the natural systems model, which sees the party's goals as the by-product of negotiations between self-interested participants, rather than the rationale of participation itself.

As Panebianco points out, this juxtaposition of different logics of participation creates tension within political parties, and this tension can be seen whenever a party leadership sacrifices the ideological purity of a party's goals in order to defend the organisation, and their position within it, from perceived threats or dangers. As will be seen later, Panebianco's model of party development is very much based on the requirements for the creation of a stable system of interests within a political party, in order to bind key elite members and groups to the organisation. But is this institutionalisation? The idea of an institution being a stable equilibrium of competing private interests is in conflict with the view of Selznick and Huntington, whereby institutionalisation was essentially an organisation's acquisition of value as a collective or a social group:

Institutional interests differ from the interests of the individuals who are in the institutions (...). Individual interests are necessarily short-run interests. Institutional interests, however, exist through time<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Michels, Political parties. A sociological study of the oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy, The Free Press, New York, 1962 (1911).

<sup>13</sup> The rational model is the classical paradigm of organisation theory. The natural system was elaborated in opposition to this approach by, amongst others, Amitai Etzioni, "Two approaches to organizational analysis: A critique and a suggestion", Administrative Science Quarterly, 5, 2, September 1960, pp.257-279. For a recent summary of this debate, see Bent Abrahamsson, The logic of organizations, London, Sage, 1993, pp.71-128.

<sup>14</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.11.

<sup>15</sup> Huntington, Political order in changing societies, Op.cit., p.25.

Whilst the stability of an organisation is favoured by a stable distribution of benefits to key members or internal groups, this does not amount to institutionalisation. A system of interests dependent on the continued distribution of, say, executive power positions to key elite members, could collapse as a result of a catastrophic electoral defeat which left the party without sufficient representation to participate in government. Institutionalisation is a function of both internal and external commitments, which go beyond the satisfaction of narrow, short-term private interests, and instead reflect "emotional identification" with the institution. The external commitments of identifying voters make electoral collapse less likely, and the internal commitments of party members safeguard a sufficient level of organisational participation even in the event of exclusion from patronage.

The institutionalisation of a political party can therefore be understood as the development of diffuse loyalties. Here I take this to mean that the party's members, both at elite and grass-roots level<sup>16</sup>, identify with it to the extent that its value to them goes beyond the perceived short-term benefits (collective or selective) that it provides. Therefore, "loyalty can be understood as a degree of identification. One identifies with a group to the highest degree when the cost of one's acting together with others for the same collective ends is zero"<sup>17</sup>. This kind of loyalty is a stable, long-term commitment to the party as a "legitimate institution in the abstract", and the more a party member identifies with the party, the more he or she is unlikely to withdraw participation, even though the party may fail to provide concrete benefits of any kind. This same dynamic also applies to a political party's social base, the "electorate of belonging". "Party identification" involves voters acquiring such a stable and durable commitment to the ideals and values represented by a party that they unthinkingly give it their vote, above and beyond the concrete collective benefits (in form of application of, or opposition to, certain public policies) that the party may offer at any given moment<sup>18</sup>. Again, the implication of this is that the party's electoral support will not

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<sup>16</sup> It will be argued later that there is no clear distinction between the logics of participation of these two groups.

<sup>17</sup> Alessandro Pizzorno, "Some other kinds of otherness", in Alejandro Foxley, Michael McPherson and Guillermo O'Donnell (eds.), Development, democracy and the art of trespassing: Essays in honor of Albert O.Hirschman, Notre Dame, University Of Notre Dame Press, 1986, pp.357-358.

<sup>18</sup> The classic formulation of party identification is the so-called Michigan model; see Angus Campbell, Philip E.Converse, Warren E.Miller, Donald E.Stokes, The American voter, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1960 and Elections and the political order, New York, Wiley, 1966; also Philip Converse, "Of time and

fluctuate so wildly as to put at risk its organisational survival, whatever the party's political output.

It is not necessary here to offer a social psychological explanation of the creation of these kinds of emotional commitments. What can be established, on the other hand, is that certain conditions must prevail for the process of institutionalisation to take place. First of all, it can be assumed that a key element is time:

Newly established social and political institutions somehow accumulate a deepening stability with the passage of time. (...) Threats to the survival of a new institution will be very high in its infant stages. In the degree that it can outlast these first precarious periods, it will typically have put forth roots of sufficient strength so that challenges to its very being diminish in number and those that do occur are warded off with increasing ease. It becomes sanctified and protected by "the weight of historical tradition"<sup>19</sup>.

Quite how much time must pass for a process of institutionalisation to be identified is unclear, although it seems unlikely that five years - the period of UCD's existence - could be sufficient for significant emotional attachments to take hold. Certainly, party collapse must mean that institutionalisation has not taken place: the significant desertion of voters and members from a political organisation is unlikely to occur, and still less to cause the organisation's disappearance, if the party has a core of identifying voters and members who provide it with the stability to survive organisational crises. Low institutionalisation is a necessary, though not sufficient condition for party collapse. But if institutionalisation requires time, then all institutionalised parties must have survived a certain period of vulnerability to organisational shocks. In cases where new parties collapse, what must be explained is organisations' inability to survive long enough for institutionalisation to take hold.

The aim of this thesis is not to explain the emergence of emotional identification with political parties. For the purposes of this research, institutionalisation is assumed to be the result of a political party maintaining firm commitments to both members and supporters over a long period of time. Instead the conceptual framework presented in the following pages aims at providing the means to explain how a political party can achieve the necessary stability of commitments to survive early threats and for the process of institutionalisation to

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partisan stability", Comparative Political Studies, 2, 2, July 1969. For a more recent summary see Klaus Von Beyme, Political parties in Western democracies, Aldershot, Gower, 1985, pp.293-305.

<sup>19</sup> Philip Converse, "Of time and partisan stability", *Op.cit.*, p.1.

begin. To that extent, the dependent variable is organisational consolidation, rather than institutionalisation.

### **3. Theories of participation in political parties**

A fundamental building block for a theory of party development is a model of collective action able to explain the consolidation of participation in a political party. An institutionalised party can count on a core of party identifiers whose participation is virtually cost-free and therefore unlikely to be withdrawn. However the establishment of the commitments on which such identification can be based must take place under less secure circumstances: the party in its initial phase of development has no similar certainties regarding the participation essential to its activities. How is it then that new parties are able to stabilise and consolidate their participation, providing the conditions for identification to emerge?

This problem can be usefully analysed in terms of incentives. Several authors have conceptualised political parties as organisations that induce participation through the distribution of incentives<sup>20</sup>. This implies a kind of exchange: the organisation offers certain benefits in order to capture resources which enable it to function. One of these resources is participation, since a political organisation is a form of collective action - without participants it ceases to exist. Some participants are able to offer more resources than others, making their participation more important. The stability of flows of resources can be seen as a function of the flows of benefits or incentives (promises of benefits) to participants, providing potential explanations for the maintenance or collapse of collective action:

When the flow of benefits is interrupted, the organisation is in serious trouble: revolts break out, leaders are contested (...). If continuity in the flow of benefits is interrupted or becomes uncertain, an "authority crisis" is triggered off in the party<sup>21</sup>.

Therefore any explanation of participation and/or its withdrawal must examine the motivations and goals of the participants, the resources they have to offer, and the incentives and benefits

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<sup>20</sup> The classic typology of incentives for participation can be found in Peter B.Clark and James Q.Wilson, "Incentive systems: a theory of organisations", Administrative Science Quarterly, 6, 1961, pp.129-166. See also James Q.Wilson, Political organisations, New York, Basic Books, 1973.

<sup>21</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.40.

offered by the organisation in order to attract and maintain their involvement.

Incentive theory works on the assumption that collective action, in this case the creation of a political party, does not spontaneously emerge without some form of leadership capable of distributing incentives to participants. The initial generation of a political organisation is seen as the responsibility of a political entrepreneur or group of such entrepreneurs, whose control over significant resources for collective action enables them to recruit other participants<sup>22</sup>. In this model a process of bargaining takes place, whereby the more important the resources available to the potential participants, the more the party leaders are liable to offer them the incentives they are most interested in. In this way the relationship between the various participants, rather than being simply hierarchical, is one of mutual dependency:

the power relation between a leader and his followers must be conceived as a relation of unequal exchange in which the leader gets more than the followers, but must nonetheless give something in return<sup>23</sup>.

The difference in the importance of the resources controlled by the various party members creates an internal inequality system, which results in the emergence of a party elite, whose participation carries a high price, and a grass-roots membership, whose participation is necessary too, although the contribution of each individual member has a negligible impact on the organisation's ability to operate.

There is considerable disagreement amongst party theorists over the nature of the incentives distributed to different types of participants. A number of authors have applied Mancur Olson's by-product theory to explain the exchanges between organisations and individual participants<sup>24</sup>. A good example of this approach is the work of Schlesinger, who maintains that

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<sup>22</sup> Max Weber, "Parties", in Economy and society: An outline of interpretative sociology, New York, Bedminster Press, 1968, Vol.1, pp.284-. For a more recent conceptualisation of the resources held by political entrepreneurs, see Jean Pierre Lacam, "Le politicien investisseur. Un modèle d'interprétation des ressources politiques", Revue Française de Science Politique, 38, 1, 1988, pp.23-47.

<sup>23</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op. cit., p.22. This conceptualisation of power is inspired by Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg in L'acteur et le système: les contraintes de l'action collective, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1977 (in English translation Actors and systems. The politics of collective action, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1980).

<sup>24</sup> Mancur Olson, The logic of collective action, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1965.

In large groups, such as a political party, the increment in the collective good (winning the election, achieving its policies) resulting from a single participant's activity is so small that it will not be equal to or greater than the cost of the effort to the individual, and therefore no rational person will participate to achieve the collective good. (...) Since people obviously do contribute to parties, in Olson's theory they must do so in order to gain side payments, or private benefits they would have not received had they not contributed<sup>25</sup>.

Therefore parties cannot count on sustained participation without significant distribution of private benefits, because individuals do not participate in response to collective incentives - the production of public or semi-public goods. The real motor of the party organisation are the political entrepreneurs, those with most access to private benefits, whose participation is therefore not subject to the temptation of the free-rider<sup>26</sup>. Since the public goods produced which are the outcomes of the collective action - the party's output - are a mere by-product of participation, they have no impact on levels of involvement; activists respond only to selective incentives - the private goods offered by the organisation.

The acceptance of the validity of Olson's logic of collective action for involvement in political parties implies the assumption that "politicians are creatures of ambition whose goal is officeholding"<sup>27</sup>. Therefore the organisational consolidation of a political party would be a simple function of the leadership's ability to distribute sufficient private benefits to important participants: in other words the creation of a system of interests affecting primarily the party elite. This model has been applied to case studies in order to argue that party schisms are the result of career frustrations amongst ambitious members, and that institutionalisation is the result of the creation of effective internal "reward systems"<sup>28</sup>. A distinctive feature of this approach is that ideological and programmatic issues are deliberately ignored as explanatory variables, being regarded instead as by-products of the struggle for

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<sup>25</sup> Joseph A. Schlesinger, "On the theory of party organisation", The Journal of Politics, 46, 1984, pp.369-400 (p.385). Other works by Schlesinger along similar lines are: "Political party organisation", in James March (ed.), Handbook of organisations, Chicago, Rand McNally, 1964; Ambition and politics. Political careers in the United States, Chicago, Rand McNally, 1966; "The primary goals of political parties: A clarification of positive theory", American Political Science Review, 69, 1975, pp.840-849.

<sup>26</sup> See also Daniel Gaxie, "Economie des partis et rétributions du militantisme", Revue Française de Science Politique, 17, 1977, pp.123-154.

<sup>27</sup> E.Spencer Wellhofer and Timothy Hennessey, "Political party development: Institutionalisation, leadership recruitment, and behaviour", American Journal of Political Science, 18, 1974, pp.135-165 (p.137).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.; E.Spencer Wellhofer, "Political parties as 'Communities of fate': Tests with Argentine party elites", American Journal of Political Science, 18, 1974, pp.347-363.

private rewards.

The implication of this is that established parties should be analysed through the natural systems rather than the rational model. Panebianco uses this approach for the analysis of the behaviour of elite participants, whilst maintaining that grass-roots members remain more attached to the party's goals. He argues that as a party consolidates, then the emphasis in the distribution of organisational incentives moves from collective to selective as a system of interests is created<sup>29</sup>. In this view, the key elite actors see the party as a source of private benefits:

The only aim that the different participants have in common, their lowest common denominator (which prevents an organisational "deflagration") is the survival of the organisation. This is precisely the condition that allows the different actors to follow their own particular objectives<sup>30</sup>.

This view of participation appears to assume what it is trying to explain. Actors follow their own particular objectives within the framework of their commitment to the survival of the organisation. However, unless this commitment is the function of some other kind of loyalty, then the system of interests is a source of organisational fragility, because discontented elite actors could easily leave and join another party capable of offering more private benefits.

This study rejects the assumption that elite actors respond predominantly to selective incentives, and that judicious distribution of private benefits is the basis for organisational consolidation. The economic assumptions of the Olsonian model of participation are unsuitable for the analysis of political behaviour. Even voting, that basic pillar of democratic politics, has not been adequately explained in Olsonian terms<sup>31</sup>. But party activism (and indeed trades union membership and participation in social movements in general) is perhaps the classic example of collective action with high private costs and public benefits, which is

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<sup>29</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., pp.6-20.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.8.

<sup>31</sup> For a recent examination of the debate on the so-called "voters' paradox" see J.H.Aldrich, "Rational choice and turnout", American Journal of Political Science, 37, 1, February 1993. A critical survey can be found in Donald Green and Ian Shapiro, Pathologies of rational choice theory. A critique of applications in political science, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994.



too widespread to dismiss as an anomaly<sup>32</sup>. The application of Olsonian assumptions to the analysis of participation in political parties in fact imposes a clear division between elite members, whose access to private benefits is a sufficient pay-off to secure involvement, and grass-roots members, whose involvement cannot be explained in terms of private benefits<sup>33</sup>. Grass-roots participation is explained by means of an inelegant ad hoc adjustment:

when we turn to groups such as parties, in which neither benefits nor costs can readily be measured in the same terms, Olson's theory is not invalidated. It is, however, less likely to be completely predictive; that is because the ability to make cost-and-benefit calculations is unevenly distributed in society<sup>34</sup>.

"Irrational" grass-roots participation - participation solely in terms of collective benefits - is the result of ignorance and inexperience.

The Olsonian approach is further undermined by difficulties in the conceptualisation of selective benefits for elite actors. Politicians are seen as power-seekers, who pursue the private benefit of power positions, rather than material benefits<sup>35</sup>. However it has been argued that this pursuit of power as a private benefit is a problematic concept<sup>36</sup>. Power, in the sense of office-holding, is generally the capacity to govern a collectivity, and to produce public goods which will affect that collectivity. Office-holding without governing is not really power, but merely the "trappings", the prestige of office. But the most prestigious political offices are those which have most influence on decisions and events<sup>37</sup>. Power must involve

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<sup>32</sup> The literature on Olson's theory of collective action is immense. The following texts have served as the principal inspiration for the critique presented here: Albert Hirschman, Shifting involvements. Private interest and public action, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982; Alessandro Pizzorno, "Sulla razionalità della scelta democratica", Stato e mercato, 7, April 1983, "Considérations sur les théories des mouvements sociaux", Politix, 9, 1990, p.75, "Identità e interesse", in L.Sciolla (ed.), Identità. Percorsi di analisi in sociologia, Turin, Rosenberg and Sellier, 1983, pp.139-154; Leopoldo Moscoso, "Lucha de clases: acción colectiva, orden y cambio social", Zona abierta, 61/62, 1992, pp.81-187; Luca Lanzalaco, "Potere, organizzazioni e logica 'politica'", Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica, 16, 2, August 1986, pp.239-272.

<sup>33</sup> See Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., pp.21-32.

<sup>34</sup> Schlesinger, "On the theory of party organisation", Op. cit., p.386.

<sup>35</sup> An example of the use of this model of political action is the game-theoretical approach to the study of coalitions inspired by William Riker, The theory of political coalitions, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1962.

<sup>36</sup> Pizzorno, "Sulla razionalità della scelta democratica", Op.cit., pp.10-11.

<sup>37</sup> An example of the emptiness of the "trappings" without the power is the British House of Lords. The inferior status of the Lords amongst British political elites is captured in the expression "to be kicked upstairs".

the distribution of public goods, and therefore cannot be coherently defined as a private benefit. Of course, the conquest of power is an important motivation for political activism at elite level. But except in some cases of corruption, politicians in power act in terms of interests which are not just their own. Research on coalition formation has revealed that the power-seeker model is difficult to apply, since office-holding is as much an indispensable means of producing public benefits as it is a private benefit<sup>38</sup>. As one study has argued, "government ministries are the most tangible manifestations of policy payoffs to governing parties in that they give parties an institutional base from which to attempt to influence the entire flow of public policy"<sup>39</sup>. In the framework for analysis proposed here, the concept of "power for its own sake" is replaced by a purposive view of power aimed at the production of some kind of public good, which may or may not be party policy objectives, but which in any case go beyond a narrow view of private benefit.

These considerations suggest that organisational consolidation cannot be adequately explained in terms of the distribution of selective incentives to key elite participants, and the naive loyalty of the grass-roots. This dualism, as Kitschelt has pointed out, fails to explain why in some cases leaders are more attached to collective goals than grass-roots activists, and how conflicting coalitions of leaders and grass-roots activists can emerge<sup>40</sup>. Instead, it will be argued here that collective action should be conceptualised as purposive and instrumental (although not necessary self-interested), and that political participation at all levels can often be explained in terms of its explicit (or implicit) goals<sup>41</sup>. In order to demonstrate this, the free-rider dilemma must be resolved within a model in which individuals act collectively in order to achieve political objectives consisting in the production of public goods. This can be done by adapting the assumptions of the rationality of political actors, in line with a proposal

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<sup>38</sup> See for instance Michael Laver and Norman Schofield, Multiparty government. The politics of coalition in Europe, London, Oxford University Press, 1990, Chapter 3.

<sup>39</sup> Eric Browne and Mark Franklin, "Aspects of coalition payoffs in European parliamentary democracies", American Political Science Review, 67, 2, 1973, pp.453-469 (p.454).

<sup>40</sup> Herbert Kitschelt, The logics of party formation. Ecological politics in Belgium and West Germany, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1989, p.45.

<sup>41</sup> This is not to suggest that other incentives, such as solidary (specific or otherwise) and material incentives, have no role in motivating participation in political parties. However, they seem to have much less explanatory power than purposive incentives for the kind of organisational phenomena studied here.

made by Lanzalaco for the study of participation in interest groups<sup>42</sup>. This model of collective action introduces a variable ignored by economic explanations: the content of the public good pursued. Collective interests are not given a priori; indeed they are constantly defined and redefined, and it is through collective action that actors come to discover the interests they share with other actors<sup>43</sup>. Individual actors require that the objectives of the organisation should be coherent with their own objectives, otherwise their participation may be withdrawn (although this withdrawal may be avoided in some cases through the distribution of private benefits). For this reason, participation is not only a function of the costs of involvement in relation to the benefits of the goods produced; individuals participate in order to contribute to the definition as well as the production of the good.

This provides a response to the free-rider dilemma. Olson's analysis only applies to cases in which a large group has fairly obvious common interests, and free-riders can safely assume that the public good, which all members of the group want, can be produced by the rest. But few cases are so clear-cut: very often a plurality of divergent or even conflicting interests are at work, and the public good for some may be seen by others as a public "evil"<sup>44</sup>, or at least not as important as another public or semi-public good. Political actors, far from being tempted by the free-ride, have every reason to participate as fully as possible in collective action, in order to channel the organisation in the direction they feel would be most likely to achieve their preferred objectives. Whilst Olson concentrates on the individual participant's (all but negligible) contribution to the production of a given public good, Lanzalaco introduces the possibility of the individual influencing the definition of the content of the good. Olson's simplistic "economic" cost-benefit analysis is replaced by a "political" rationality involving the strategic use of power resources in order to condition other actors in their choices and therefore maximise participants' influence over events affecting their interests.

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<sup>42</sup> Luca Lanzalaco, "Potere, organizzazioni e logica 'politica' dell'azione collettiva", Op.cit. Lanzalaco takes up the critique of Michael Laver, "Political solutions to the collective action problem", Political Studies, 18, 1980, pp.185-98.

<sup>43</sup> See Claus Offe and Helmut Wessenthal, "Two logics of collective action: Theoretical notes on social class and organisational form", in M.Zeitlin (ed.), Political power and social theory, Vol.1, Greenwich, JAI Press, 1980.

<sup>44</sup> See Albert O.Hirschman, Exit, voice and loyalty. Responses to the decline in firms, organisations and States, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1970, pp.98-105.

The Olsonian objection to this proposal would probably be as follows: it is all very well for the actor to use his resources in order to influence the outcome of collective action, but in large groups and with few resources individuals would still risk incurring high costs for very little benefit, since participation would probably only bring a negligible improvement in their ability to defend their individual interests by conditioning the objectives of collective action. The response to this argument is the introduction of two new concepts which provide for a more sophisticated analysis of the individual costs and benefits of participation in collective action: the actor's need for collective action, and the opportunities for control over the objectives of the collective action<sup>45</sup>.

The need for collective action is a function of three factors: the extent to which the actor has to cooperate with others in order to obtain certain goods, the relevance of these goods for the achievement of his objectives, and the probability of obtaining these goods. Political actors link their resources in a coordinated manner, thus creating new resources. When certain objectives can only be achieved through collective action, refusing to participate in such action simply means giving up those objectives or leaving them to fate. So if the possibility of achieving a public good is dependent on collective action, if collective action makes the achievement of the good probable, and if that good is important for the actor concerned, then participation rather than free-riding becomes the rational response.

Participation in collective action is encouraged by the prospect of influence over the outcome of that action. In the case of political parties, the outcome of collective action, whether in the form of policies followed when holding executive power, or the strategy for achieving influence over public policy and maintaining electoral support, is rarely a source of total agreement amongst party members. The possible output of a political party is not a given, and therefore free-riding does not usually carry the certainty that a public benefit will be enjoyed at no personal cost. The Olsonian idea of a static cost-benefit analysis with an unchangeable public good defined a priori is quite unrealistic for most cases of political involvement. Olson's rational calculus fails to take into account the costs of not acting: free-riders may not "waste" their resources, but neither are their interests necessarily defended by others - there is no guarantee that the public good produced will be the one they wanted, even though its consequences will affect them all the same. Therefore an individual will be more

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<sup>45</sup> Lanzalaco, "Potere, organizzazione e logica 'politica' dell'azione collettiva", Op.cit., p.260.

willing to participate in collective action the greater the opportunities offered for influencing the definition of its objectives<sup>46</sup>.

At this point we should consider the importance of the different amount of resources controlled by individuals participating in the action. It can be assumed that the organisational actors possessing resources important to the maintenance of the organisation and the achievement of its goals will be offered greater opportunities to influence the outcome of the collective action. All political parties need, to a greater or lesser extent, participants in a position to obtain financial support for the organisation, offer technical or political expertise (administrative or electoral campaigning skills, for instance), mediate with other organisations to the party's advantage, obtain human resources or otherwise strengthen the organisation<sup>47</sup>. Analysis of the distribution of such resources enables us to identify the actors most likely to occupy power positions within the elite of the political organisation. Grass-roots participants usually hold limited resources, and are therefore unlikely to be offered much say over policy goals and the means of achieving them, since individually they are unable to pressure the leadership by threatening to withdraw their resources. However participants who can offer resources are likely to be offered more opportunities for influence, in order to encourage their continued participation. Observation of the uneven distribution of political resources and the opportunities for policy influence offered in terms of those resources will enable us to analyse the actions of elite and grass-roots participants without simply assuming them to be opportunistic power-seekers and naive victims, as assumed by Michels and others.

#### **4. Party consolidation: Interdependency and loyalty**

Political parties consolidate when a situation of stable interdependency is created amongst the key actors and groups who control the most important resources for the organisation's functioning (the zones of uncertainty). However the interplay between these organisational actors should be analysed on the basis of the assumption that their behaviour is essentially purposive, that is, aimed at achieving objectives that can only be achieved

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp.266-8.

<sup>47</sup> For an examination of the types of organisational resources relevant to the internal power dynamics of parties, see Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., pp.33-36.

through collective action. Here the aim is to explain how interdependency emerges, and what it consists of.

An essential starting-point for this discussion is the work of Hirschman, which is a source of many of the assumptions used in the model of collective action presented above<sup>48</sup>. Loyalty is the idea of a "barrier to exit": a loyal party member, although disappointed with the party's output, will try to change and improve the organisation from within before abandoning it. It is therefore a key element in organisational consolidation and institutionalisation: the higher the cost of exit to individual members, the less the party has to provide them with concrete benefits in order to maintain their participation, and the easier it is for the party to survive "hard times" in which benefits are unavailable. When a party is in its infancy, it is unlikely to have many "loyal", or "identifying" members, for whom the costs of exit are unsustainably high. However it can hope to maintain participation through interdependency, which places the party's potential to satisfy members' demands and objectives in the context of existing collective action alternatives. For interdependency to promote consolidation, the party must achieve a stable distribution of incentives. However, when incentives are scarce, interdependency encourages a degree of bargaining between the member and the organisation (an impossibility for the "identifier")<sup>49</sup>. Despite resting on a rational calculus of costs and benefits, interdependency can explain the kind of stability in participation necessary for organisational consolidation and the development of participant loyalty.

In order to understand the sources of interdependency, the party organisation must be seen in its political and social context. The extent to which members are likely to tolerate the frustrations of remaining in a party whose output dissatisfies or even infuriates them is a function of their need for that particular form of collective action. This depends on the importance to them of the objectives they hope to pursue through participation in that party, and the existence of other possibilities of collective action for the achievement of these objectives. Here this calculation will be referred to as the exit options available to participants. In the absence of loyalty, exit options can put participation at risk, as Hirschman

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<sup>48</sup> Albert Hirschman, Exit, voice and loyalty, Op.cit.

<sup>49</sup> This analysis of loyalty and identification corresponds to Pizzorno's interpretation of Hirschman's theory in "Some kinds of otherness", Op.cit., pp.358-360.

explains:

The usefulness of loyalty depends on the closeness of the available substitute (...). Its role as a barrier to exit can be constructive when organisations are close substitutes so that a small deterioration of one of them will send customer-members scurrying to the other<sup>50</sup>.

The level of interdependency of party members is affected by the nature of the exit options available - what Panebianco calls the substitutability of organisational incentives<sup>51</sup>. In the case of a political party, exit options are generally other parties whose objectives are near enough to the participant's to offer some prospect of adequate collective benefits (or on occasion selective benefits). An important barrier to exit is the fact that parties are public good producing organisations:

Organisations and firms producing public goods or public evils constitute the environment in which loyalist behaviour (that is, postponement of exit in spite of dissatisfaction and qualms) peculiarly thrives and assumes several distinctive characteristics (...). In the case of public goods (...), in spite of exit one remains a consumer of the output, or at least of its external effects from which there is no escape<sup>52</sup>.

Exiting party members must be sure that they will not have less chance of achieving their preferred public goods outside the party than inside. To this extent the participation calculus must consider several variables relating to the nature of the political environment. Exit in favour of another political party depends on the ideological or programmatic proximity of other existing parties, often a function of the number of parties. Exit to create a new party is affected by the institutional framework of party competition (the electoral system) and the openness of electors to new alternatives (the level of party identification). Finally, the possibility of exit to pursue objectives through other means (for example through interest groups) depends on the extent to which such groups can influence the relevant decision-making processes, and the availability of groups liable to pursue such objectives. In all cases, the costs involved in exit suggest that the potential benefits offered by alternatives to the party

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<sup>50</sup> Hirschman, Exit, voice and loyalty, Op.cit., p.80.

<sup>51</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.31.

<sup>52</sup> Hirschman, Exit, voice and loyalty, Op.cit., p.104.

must be more than simply marginally superior to those enjoyed by remaining. The chances of a party surviving its early vulnerability are therefore conditioned to some extent by the nature of the political environment in which it acts, and the degree to which it can acquire a "monopoly position" in the political "market", encouraging loyalty amongst party members<sup>53</sup>.

The availability of exit options to party members provides them with a degree of autonomy with regard to the organisation, permitting them to bargain with it from a position of strength. This autonomy is also a function of the zones of uncertainty controlled by members; an individual grass-roots member, whose only resource is a willingness to knock on a few doors at election-time, will not be in a strong bargaining position, however feasible his/her exit option. The more autonomy party members or sub-groups have, the less dependent they are on the other party members or groups for the achievement of their objectives, and the greater their bargaining power. Therefore interdependency is higher when the components of the organisation have less autonomy, and are obliged to work together if they wish to exert influence over the production of public goods. High interdependency makes organisational consolidation more likely, as the participation necessary for the party to function is less likely to be withdrawn.

Of course, this is essentially an interdependency of means, rather than a convergence of aims. Participants are obliged to work together, because they will have no chance of achieving their objectives without the rest of the organisation. In this sense, interdependency can mean forced coexistence, maintained by the absence of exit options. This situation could affect, for instance, a working-class member of a labour party whose leadership refuses to respond to the demands of its working-class constituency in the sure knowledge that workers have no better alternative for collective action in the defence of their interests. Interdependency could imply the tyranny of the most autonomous members of an organisation over those lacking resources and exit options. If there is a broad consensus over the objectives to be pursued by the party, then this in theory should not compromise the distribution of collective incentives even to the most powerless members of the organisation. However if there is considerable disagreement over those objectives, the least autonomous members of the party could find their preferences ignored by a leadership aware that exit is not available

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp.55-75. This point is also made by Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.31.



for them. In this way the possibility of a form of "participation through coercion", emerges. This raises the question of whether the stable participation necessary for organisational consolidation can be achieved through coercive means, and if so, what implications this has for the party's output.

"Coercive" participation - that is, participation under a situation of complete dependency with regard to the party - can, under certain circumstances, be a source of interdependency<sup>54</sup>. Panebianco proposes that institutionalisation can be measured in terms of autonomy (to be discussed later) and systemness, the internal structural coherence of a party. In this formulation, high internal coherence is the result of the interdependency of the party sub-groups, who cannot act separately to achieve their objectives. This interdependency, or systemness (sistemicità), implies that the members or sub-groups of a party do not autonomously control important zones of uncertainty; cooperation is "assured by the centralised control of organisational resources and exchange processes with the environment"<sup>55</sup>. Similarly, low coherence implies the dispersal of control of zones of organisational uncertainty amongst participating individuals and groups. The logic behind this formulation is that a participant or sub-group with autonomous resources is in a position to weaken the organisation by threatening to withdraw its resources, making participation an uncertain outcome of power games inside the party, rather than a constant effort in pursuit of shared goals. Thus the most effective way to guarantee stability of participation is to concentrate control over the resources necessary for the party's functioning in the hands of the party leadership - what Panebianco calls a cohesive dominant coalition<sup>56</sup> - who are presumably more committed to its organisational consolidation.

This view of interdependency rests on the assumption of high substitutability of benefits. If control over organisational resources is dispersed, it will be difficult to maintain participation of the various key members or groups as they can all credibly threaten to withdraw participation if insufficient benefits are distributed. Therefore the key zones of uncertainty must be in the hands of a narrow circle of leaders committed to the party's survival (presumably for selfish motives). However the costs of exit for elite actors must be

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<sup>54</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., pp.49-67.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p.56.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp.38-39.

taken into account. First of all the costs of joining or founding a different party are usually, in practical terms, rather high, so the benefits available in a different party must in fact be rather greater than in the original one for the move to be worthwhile. Secondly, the substitutability of collective benefits between different political parties is often quite low: parties do not generally duplicate each other's policy positions. Finally, for this view of interdependency to hold, the dispersal of control over resources must be matched by a degree of incompatibility between the political objectives sought by the various members or groups. If there is a broad consensus over the party's goals, then dispersal of control over resources should not hinder cooperation, as well-resourced groups or members will not be in competition for the definition of those goals, and adequate collective incentives can be distributed to all. Withdrawing participation, with all the costs that can involve, only makes sense if rival groups impose unacceptable collective goals on the organisation.

In a voluntary association such as a political party, internal coherence depends on a complex bargaining process between organisational actors on the basis of their autonomy and aims. Organisational consolidation is a function of the distribution of collective benefits and the exit options available to participants, as well as the zones of organisational uncertainty they control. Participation will be maintained if party members receive sufficient collective incentives. If not, then party members, however weak, must feel that the party may distribute adequate incentives in the future if they are to continue participating. Our hypothetical labour party radical, however limited his/her autonomy, must feel he/she is making some contribution, however negligible, to pushing the party "in the right direction" if he/she is going to undergo the costs of participation. It could be argued that a radical member of a conservative party, assumed to have autonomous resources, would insist on an even higher pay-off in terms of influence over output than would the socially weaker labour radical. In any case, the assumptions introduced earlier would seem to preclude participation under coercion in a political party. This implies that the way in which a party's objectives are defined becomes an important part of the individual participant's bargaining with the organisation.

## **5. Party organisation and voice: Structures of decision-making**

Hirschman argues that exit alone is a poor explanation of the dynamics of social

behaviour unless accompanied by the concept of voice. Voice - all kinds of protest and persuasion in order to push an organisation into changing course - is the last resort of discontented customer/party members before withdrawing their custom/participation altogether, and has an important role in preventing organisations from immediately collapsing when their performance deteriorates. Therefore if a party member is dissatisfied with the organisation's output, he/she can transmit this dissatisfaction to the party's decision-makers, postponing exit until it becomes clear that this voice will have no influence over the elaboration of party objectives.

The relationship of voice to exit and loyalty is complex and paradoxical. The more loyal the party member, the more likely he/she is to use exit only as a last resort when voice has proved to have no impact on party output. However, the effectiveness of voice is increased by the availability of feasible exit options: "the chances for voice to function effectively as a recuperation mechanism are appreciably strengthened if voice is backed up by the threat of exit"<sup>57</sup>. Moreover the threat of exit is all the more potent if the dissatisfied member controls zones of organisational uncertainty. But even members without exit options can make effective use of voice, as their "captive" position provides them with a strong incentive to maximise their potential influence over organisational output. This phenomenon undermines the possibility of organisational consolidation on the basis of coercive participation by questioning

the inference that the "captive" consumer (or voter) who has "nowhere else to go" is the epitome of powerlessness. True, he cannot exit to the other firm or party and in this way bring pressure on his own firm or party to improve its performance, but just because of that he, unlike the consumer or voter who can exit, will be maximally motivated to bring all sorts of potential influence into play so as to keep the firm or the party from doing things that are highly obnoxious to him<sup>58</sup>.

In the case of a political party, the widespread assumption that the organisation should pay some attention to its membership makes internal protests potentially embarrassing for the party leadership. Although the effects of internal conflict vary across political systems, even a small number of dissident members can often damage a party's public standing by

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<sup>57</sup> Hirschman, Exit, voice and loyalty, Op.cit., p.82.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p.70.

publicising their discontent. Hirschman argues that party democracy can be enhanced by an "optimal mix" of exit and voice:

The best possible arrangement for the development of party responsiveness to the feelings of members may then be a system of just a very few parties, whose distance from each other is wide, but not unbridgeable. In this situation, exit remains possible, but the decision to exit will not be taken lightheartedly<sup>59</sup>.

These characteristics can favour the organisational consolidation, and ultimately the institutionalisation, of political parties.

The other major factor in determining recourse to voice rather than exit is the potential for real influence over the process of formulation of party objectives. The success of voice, and the extent to which exit can be postponed, depend on the way in which the party's decision-making processes are structured. Following Hirschman, it can be taken that for each political party, there is an "optimal mix" of exit and voice options<sup>60</sup>, whereby the opportunities for voice will be sufficient to prevent the withdrawal of well-resourced participants in the event of their being unhappy with the party's output. The extent to which that optimal mix is achieved is dependent on the organisational structures a party adopts, and the ability of those structures to adapt to reflect changes in the party's internal coherence and external environment.

Parties' strategic behaviour, and by extension the types of collective incentives they are able to distribute to participants, are determined by the decisions made by their dominant coalitions<sup>61</sup>. The formation of a dominant coalition is, in turn, mediated by the party's organisational rules, which "bias the effectiveness of intraorganisational group mobilisation and coalition-building" and thus "determine how quickly dominant coalitions inside parties can be displaced by new contenders"<sup>62</sup>. The bargaining between different party members and

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p.84.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p.74.

<sup>61</sup> For Panebianco's conceptualisation of the dominant coalition, see Political parties, Op.cit., pp.33-45. The definition used here is that of Herbert Kitschelt, which sees the dominant coalition as groups of both elite and grass-roots party members, rather than just the former: see The logics of party formation. Ecological politics in Belgium and West Germany, Op.cit., (Chap.2) and The transformation of European social democracy, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994 (Chap.5).

<sup>62</sup> Kitschelt, The transformation of European social democracy, Op.cit., p.207.

groups therefore does not take place in an open and fluid context: the framework for the election of party offices, and the distribution of decisional authority between them, condition the opportunities for different participants to influence the definition of party objectives. Two important dimensions for gauging the consequences of parties' organisational frameworks are organisational entrenchment and leadership accountability/autonomy. Entrenchment - the size, bureaucratisation and ideological homogeneity of a party organisation - favours continuity of party strategy, by making small changes in the demands of the membership unlikely to make much of an impact on the dominant coalition's grip on power<sup>63</sup>. Leadership accountability or autonomy is the degree to which decision-making is centralised around the party's top leadership; the more centralised the party's authority structures, the easier it is for a dominant coalition to ignore challenges to its position from party minorities<sup>64</sup>.

Party organisation, as an intervening variable affecting a party's commitment mechanisms, can damage a party's ability to survive by introducing rigidities into its bargaining process which can undermine participation in given external conditions. The nature of organisational rules is often a consequence of the initial phase of party development, and a reflection of the bargaining position of the various groups at the time when formalisation of authority structures took place. As Panebianco argues, this implies that a party's origins acquire great significance in analysing its development:

A party's organisational characteristics depend more upon its history, i.e. on how the organisation originated and how it consolidated, than upon any other factor. The characteristics of a party's origin are in fact capable of exerting a weight on its organisational structure even decades later. Every organisation bears the mark of its formation, of the crucial **political-administrative** decisions made by its founders, the decisions which "moulded" the organisation<sup>65</sup>.

To this extent, the analysis of the features of a party's formation is an essential component of a theory of party development.

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<sup>63</sup> Kitschelt offers four measures of entrenchment: the party's member/voter ratio, the availability of patronage, the size of the party's middle-level apparatus, and the ideological integration or pluralisation of the party membership (ibid., p.222).

<sup>64</sup> Leadership autonomy can be measured by referring to the control of recruitment and party conferences, the extent to which parliamentary leaders dominate the party executive, and the autonomy of the party from secondary organisations (ibid., pp.223-225).

<sup>65</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.50. See also Maurice Duverger, "Introduction", in Political parties: Their organisation and activity in the modern State, London, Methuen, 1954.

Panebianco's discussion of the relationship between parties' genetic models and their institutionalisation is an important tool for this analysis. In his view, organisational consolidation through high autonomy and internal coherence are promoted by certain factors in a party's genetic model<sup>66</sup>. Autonomy - compromised by the presence at the party's formation of a sponsor organisation - will be discussed in a moment. Interdependency or internal coherence is favoured if a party's organisational development follows a pattern of territorial penetration<sup>67</sup>: in this case, the party develops through a process of organisational expansion from a cohesive central nucleus. In this way, the party's territorial presence is unlikely to possess significant autonomous resources and will be locked into a relationship of dependency from the party leadership. Where there is sufficient interdependency for minority participation to be sustained, development through penetration allows party leaders to establish and formalise a highly centralised power structure to protect their hold over the definition of party objectives. Organisational development through diffusion, on the other hand, involves the local associations autonomously emerging in different areas, only later uniting as a federation. In cases of expansion by diffusion, local associations have sufficient autonomous resources to defy national leaders if their objectives are not adequately pursued, with potentially destabilising effects on organisational stability. Organisational rules will have quite different features to those of cases of penetration:

A party which develops through diffusion is (...) a federation of different local groups, and the party is quite likely to give rise to decentralised and semi-autonomous structures, and consequently, to a dominant coalition divided by constant struggle for party control<sup>68</sup>.

The assumption that decentralisation leads automatically to instability is inconsistent with the theory of participation introduced earlier; however, it is certainly the case that a party which develops through diffusion will be much more likely to accommodate diversity and negotiation in its decision-making structures. In this sense, it is more likely to consolidate participation in conditions of interdependency, as the openness and decentralisation of the

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp.50-68.

<sup>67</sup> This typology is the work of Kjell Eliassen and Lars Svaasand, "The formation of mass political organisations: An analytical framework", Scandinavian political studies, 10, 1975, pp.95-121.

<sup>68</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.51.

organisational rules make voice a realistic option for discontented participants.

A third variable affecting the organisational consequences of a party's genetic model is the role of charisma, and of leadership in general. Panebianco argues that pure charisma is generally an almost insurmountable obstacle to institutionalisation, as "a party based on pure charisma has no autonomous existence apart from its leader and is entirely at his mercy"<sup>69</sup>. Pure charisma is rare, but most parties have traces of situational charisma in their genetic model. Situational charisma is the result of a crisis situation in which authoritative and successful leadership can provoke unusually enthusiastic popular approval of a political figure<sup>70</sup>. Although this figure does not have the dominance of a purely charismatic leader, situational charisma can favour the centralisation and concentration of organisational authority in the early stages of a party's existence, thus conditioning future internal bargaining. This is particularly threatening to organisational consolidation because it may lead to the creation of an internal power structure and organisational procedures based around the authority of one transitory leader, with limited channels for membership influence<sup>71</sup>. The disappearance of the leader may on occasion compromise the flow of organisational incentives, with grave consequences for party consolidation if organisational rigidities stifle the potential for voice as a cushion against exit.

The variable of organisational rules, and the process of formalisation of the relationships which constitute a political party, is a key element in organisational consolidation. In itself, it cannot explain how participation can be threatened and commitment mechanisms undermined; it simply indicates how changes in the internal dynamic of political parties can have damaging effects as a result of the failure to adapt to new conditions. In order to fully understand how such problems can arise, exogenous variables regarding the party's relationship with its political and social environment must be examined.

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p.52.

<sup>70</sup> This concept was elaborated by Robert C.Tucker, "The theory of charismatic leadership", in Dankwart A.Rustow (comp.), Philosophers and Kings. Studies in leadership, New York, George Braziller, 1970, pp.69-94.

<sup>71</sup> See also Huntington, Political order in changing societies, Op.cit.

## 6. The party in society: The development of an "electorate of belonging"

A political party's relationship with its social base underpins the dynamics of intra-party bargaining, as both the "consumer" of most of the public goods produced by the party, and the source of valuable resources for the party's activity (principally, but not only, electoral support). It was argued earlier that the stability and commitment of an organisation's social base is a fundamental element of institutionalisation. Thus, according to Selznick,

The early phase of an institution's life is marked by a scrutiny of its own capabilities, and of its environment, to discover where its resources are and on whom it is dependent. The achievement of stability is influenced by this appraisal; and the future evolution of the institution is largely conditioned by the commitments generated in this basic decision. (...) As these commitments evolve, the organisation loses its purity as an abstract or ideally envisioned entity; it assumes a definite role in a living community; it becomes institutionalised<sup>72</sup>.

But however "frozen" a party system is<sup>73</sup>, it is difficult to distinguish between "identifying" voters who are part of the institution, and less committed voters on the margins. Ideally, an institutionalised party will have a solid core of committed electoral and social support which is effectively "inside" the organisation (the "electorate of belonging"); in practice, this distinction is empirically elusive.

What is clear is that the "selection of a social base"<sup>74</sup> is part of the process of organisational consolidation. For political parties, this involves, primarily, the establishment of a stable supply of electoral support sufficient to provide the means to distribute collective benefits to party members. This electoral support, at least before party identification begins to emerge, requires the distribution of some kind of commitment mechanism - generally collective incentives or benefits. Electoral consolidation, like the maintenance of membership, is also affected by the presence or absence of exit options. Any reasonably large party has a heterogeneous electorate, which naturally implies a differing response to the party's output. Voters with feasible alternative choices are thus potentially more unstable, and the extent to which a party chooses a strategy likely to satisfy exit-prone or captive electors is an important

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<sup>72</sup> Selznick, Leadership in administration, Op.cit., p.104.

<sup>73</sup> Seymour M.Lipset and Stein Rokkan, Party systems and voter alignments, New York, Free Press, 1967.

<sup>74</sup> Selznick's term.



decision influencing its ability to consolidate. In this way a similar dynamic to the party's internal affairs is created, with the important difference that voters are much less likely to have structured opportunities to exercise voice.

The choice a party makes depends on the extent to which it decides to maximise short-term electoral support or trade off short-term gains of marginal voters against the long-term consolidation of the "core constituency". This corresponds to Kitschelt's distinction between two types of party strategy, the logic of electoral competition and the logic of constituency representation<sup>75</sup>. Electoral strategies are determined by a party's dominant coalition, in terms of a calculation of the most effective means of achieving the objectives preferred by that coalition. A dominant coalition in a conservative party whose objectives were to bring about a radical new policy agenda would presumably attempt to broaden their base of support by targeting new groups, in order to weaken their dependency on conservative electors. Similarly a "consolidating" dominant coalition would concentrate on representing its existing social base, in an attempt to "lock" the party into pursuing established goals.

The requirements of organisational consolidation in terms of the selection of a social base would seem to suggest that the logic of constituency representation is the optimal strategy for a new party seeking to institutionalise, and indeed this has been argued by a number of scholars. For example, Blondel notes that parties have tended to develop naturally through the legitimacy transferred to them by already existing groups; in this view parties win loyalty as part of the allegiance towards the social collective represented by the party is absorbed by the party itself<sup>76</sup>. Certainly it is difficult to see how party identification can take place on a significant scale if the party fails to follow a consistent strategy in defence of stable social interests. As Selznick explains,

From the standpoint of social systems rather than persons, organisations become infused with value as they come to symbolise the community's aspirations, its sense of identity. (...) As (an organisation) develops a distinctive clientele, (it) gains the stability that comes with a secure source of support, an easy channel of communication. At the same

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<sup>75</sup> Kitschelt, The logics of party formation, Op.cit., pp.48-61. In this discussion electoral strategy (the types of appeals made to obtain electoral support) and output (the political objectives pursued, and actual public policy outcomes achieved by the party) are assumed to have an almost symbiotic relationship. Although in practice differences may occur, it is assumed that parties will seek to avoid incoherences between their electoral messages and policy output.

<sup>76</sup> Jean Blondel, Political parties: A genuine case for discontent?, London, Wildwood, 1978.

time, it loses flexibility. The process of institutionalisation has set in<sup>77</sup>.

So if the need for constituency representation to take priority in a party's initial stages is assumed, an organisational dilemma emerges: the social base selected must be reasonably coherent with the distribution of preferences within the party's dominant coalition. A party can only combine stable electoral support with stable internal participation if adequate benefits can be distributed to both, and this requires a degree of coherence between their demands and preferences. As a party's membership - and still less the composition of its dominant coalition - will not necessarily reflect the interests and objectives of the party's potential social base, there is no guarantee that the party's output can satisfy both sets of requirements simultaneously.

The relationship between internal and external commitments is mediated by the existence of other organisations involved in the political process. Parties do not usually limit themselves to direct communication with isolated individual electors, nor do electors make their choices in social isolation purely on the basis of independent calculations of individual utility. Most major parties have some kind of relationship with interest groups or other socially important organisations in their "hunting domain", such as trades unions on the left or employers' organisations, and often religious associations, on the right. In some cases this involves the party taking a subordinate role, where the external organisation controls resources indispensable to the party's functioning. This is often the case of externally legitimated parties whose formation is conditioned by the presence of some kind of sponsor organisation; this implies the development of indirect loyalties, mediated by the sponsor<sup>78</sup>. The relationship of dependency thus created can undermine the party's consolidation; if the party fails to distribute sufficient benefits to sponsor organisations, they can withdraw key resources, threatening the party's survival.

Internally legitimated parties, on the other hand are likely to have higher levels of autonomy, enabling them to control their exchanges of resources with their social base, and establishing direct loyalties to the party itself<sup>79</sup>. However it must be emphasised that

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<sup>77</sup> Selznick, Leadership in administration, Op.cit., pp.19, 7.

<sup>78</sup> See Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., pp.51-56.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p.51-52.

autonomy does not mean isolation. The internally legitimated party is autonomous in the sense that it can maintain both internal and external commitments without being subject to the pressures of sponsor organisations which may pursue much more selective benefits. In this sense autonomy means that the party dominates the external organisations in its hunting domain, to the extent that they are not in a position to "pull the plug" on the party by withdrawing resources, and they do not require incentives incompatible with those distributed to the party's membership and electorate. A party can consolidate when external organisations contribute to the formation of internal and external commitments, rather than working against them by pursuing narrow or private objectives.

The problem of external sponsors or secondary organisations presents parties with a dilemma. Such organisations can make an important contribution to "solidifying" a party's core electorate, as well as providing other kinds of support, for instance financial or human resources. However these relationships inevitably affect the party's internal bargaining process, as the external organisation de facto becomes part of the dominant coalition, and its demands must be taken into account when party strategy is decided<sup>80</sup>. This creates the potential for conflict between the demands of key party members, the external sponsor, and possibly also sectors of the electorate. The organisational consolidation of a party therefore requires that these relationships reinforce a stable bargaining process between the various participants, rather than introducing elements of instability. To this extent their aims must be compatible with those defended by the party, and if there should be disagreement, their role in internal negotiations must be formalised and recognised by all participants.

## **7. Party development in a new democracy: Environmental threats to consolidation**

The relationships between party, external organisations and electorate can be better understood by examining the opportunities and constraints likely to be present in a new party's political environment. The threats to a party's consolidation which may emerge from its environment are infinitely variable, in accordance with differences in institutional arrangements, policy requirements, and social and economic conditions. Although it is impossible to analyse all the potential threats to party consolidation, this section looks at a

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp.55-56.

number of features which are particularly relevant to the case of party development in new democratic systems.

The nature of party competition in a political system provides the framework in which the strategic and distributional choices of the party are made. The social base of a party is rarely homogeneous, and dilemmas often emerge as to which set of demands should receive priority in the party's output. Moreover, the social base alone is rarely sufficient to maintain the levels of electoral support necessary to exert decisive influence over public policy: uncommitted, or inconsistent voters must also be attracted. The logic of constituency representation must therefore be mitigated by some elements of the logic of electoral competition. These dilemmas must be resolved within the context of a party system, which in new democracies is often characterised by high levels of uncertainty and fluidity.

In a new democracy, the electoral system plays an important role in moulding the party system by conditioning the initial strategic choices of political actors. The electoral system therefore determines the extent to which less committed voters (as well as party members) enjoy exit options which increase their bargaining power with regard to the party<sup>81</sup>. The greater the number of alternatives, and the closer their ideological or programmatic proximity to the party, the more likely it is that party strategy will have to be adapted to win over this support. This creates a more competitive environment, which can have a destabilising effect on new parties. It may prove difficult, for example, to distribute satisfactory collective benefits to marginal voters without neglecting key sectors of the party's membership or electorate of belonging. An added constraint is the need to maintain the support of socially relevant organisations which may have yet another set of demands, scarcely compatible with those of other groups. Of course, the extent to which an electoral system creates such difficulties is also a function of the cleavage structure, and the degree of mobilisation of societal cleavages<sup>82</sup>. An electoral law with strongly majoritarian tendencies may not destabilise parties if there are clear, non cross-cutting cleavages which fit neatly into a two-party dynamic. A more complex cleavage structure may require a more proportional electoral system, allowing a greater number of parties, thus defusing the potential divisions within each party's social base. The de-alignment detected in Western democracies, and the

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<sup>81</sup> Hirschman, Exit, voice and loyalty, Op.cit., Chap.6.

<sup>82</sup> Kitschelt, The transformation of European social democracy, Op.cit., p.210.

social changes underpinning them have a visible impact on the kinds of opportunity structures in which parties make their strategic choices<sup>83</sup>.

The type of electoral law and party system in which a new party operates affect the nature of its relationships with its rivals, and its access to influence over public policy. The strategies chosen by other parties have to be taken into account in explaining party output; if a rival chooses an aggressive strategy in an attempt to "trespass" on a party's social base, a logic of constituency representation may be necessary to fight off such a challenge. Similarly, if a rival decides to concentrate on its own constituency, then the opportunity for "raiding" emerges. In polarised pluralism, parties can be faced with bilateral opposition, facing the threat of raiding from both sides<sup>84</sup>. The picture becomes more complex if the nature of government formation is introduced as an environmental variable. Systems in which coalition government is the norm impose certain constraints on the way in which relationships with other parties are conceived: there may only be a limited number of feasible possibilities for participation in government, and freedom of manoeuvre may be affected accordingly. Where coalition government is less frequent, parties may be forced into logics of electoral competition as the only means of achieving access to government power, and therefore of influence over the production of public goods. In sum, the nature of party competition conditions a party's ability to consolidate its internal and external commitments in a number of ways.

The policy process can have particular features in new democracies, affecting the strategies parties choose for mobilising support and distributing collective benefits. The degree of consolidation of a political system can condition the extent to which governments are expected to elaborate policy in consultation with other institutional and social actors, as occurred in the case studied here. The need to draw up laws of constitutional status, or reforms which require the acquiescence of all the major political forces, can hinder a

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<sup>83</sup> Otto Kirchheimer, "The transformation of Western European party systems", in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner (eds.), Political parties and political development, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966, pp.177-200. Also Maria Maguire, "Is there still persistence? Electoral change in Western Europe 1948-79" in Hans Daalder and Peter Mair (eds.), Western European party systems: Continuity and change, London, Sage, 1983, pp.67-94.

<sup>84</sup> Giovanni Sartori, "European political parties: The case of polarised pluralism", in LaPalombara and Weiner, Political parties and political development, Op.cit., pp.137-176; Parties and party systems. A framework for analysis, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976. See also David Robertson, A theory of party competition, New York, John Wiley, 1976.

governing party's efforts to establish a social base and establish the commitments necessary for organisational consolidation. The presence or absence of problems or crises to be resolved by governments, above and beyond their attempts to provide their constituencies and memberships with collective benefits, can condition strategic decisions considerably. Here, again, the variations can be very significant between political systems and different periods of time. Features of the policy process may provide a party with a number of opportunities to consolidate their commitment mechanisms: for instance a labour party which comes to power in a period of economic growth may find it easy to follow policies likely to satisfy the distributional demands of its social base and membership. Naturally it also provides constraints, as many labour parties have found on arriving in office and finding themselves implementing unavoidable austerity policies, with a limited availability of benefits. A government may not, for "reasons of state", be in a position to give members what they want, however hard they push and threaten. In such cases something has to give, and it may be the party organisation. The susceptibility of the existing patterns of policy-making to facilitate the output pursued by a political party is a key factor in its organisational consolidation, and the initial instability of many recently established democracies can act as an obstacle to the consolidation of the parties that operate within them, particularly those with government responsibilities.

These considerations should not be taken as determinants of party output and strategic decisions; they simply provide the context of opportunities and constraints within which parties operate. As such, party development cannot be properly understood without reference to them. The above discussion does not claim to be an exhaustive examination of possible environmental variables, which would be a task way beyond the author's capabilities and the scope of this thesis. Instead a number of features relevant to the case study in hand have been introduced, and a role for them in the explanatory model traced in this Chapter has been suggested. The context in which this case of party building took place influenced the choices made by party actors in a number of ways, as will become clear in the course of this thesis. Whilst the failure of UCD to consolidate cannot be explained solely in terms of its political environment, the difficulties which the party had to resolve in its short history often led the party leaders to put the perceived interests of the State before the requirements of party consolidation.

## **8. Conclusion**

The theoretical tools outlined in this Chapter will, it is hoped, contribute to a greater understanding both of the case of UCD, and of the problem of party collapse in general. The case study takes the form of an analysis of the problems of organisational consolidation at the various stages of the party's development. At each stage of development, the distribution of incentives and influence between the organisational participants, the forms of bargaining used, the relationship with the electorate, and the impact of environmental factors will be analysed. Although all levels of participant involvement will be examined, much of the thesis focuses on the relationships between the various sectors of the party elite, as UCD disintegrated "from above". Particular emphasis will be placed on the role of leadership as an intermediary variable, and the failure of the party to overcome the exceptional nature of its origins.





## **CHAPTER 2: THE FORMATION OF THE UCD COALITION: THE ROOTS OF INTERNAL CONFLICT**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter is an analysis of the genetic model of the Unión de Centro Democrático, in which the circumstances of the formation of the UCD coalition will be examined. The principal objective is to identify the conditions under which the UCD's creation became possible. A secondary aim is to determine where UCD can be placed in Panebianco's typology of genetic models, in order to examine the relationship between the party's origins and its failure to institutionalise. An adaptation of the key concepts of penetration and diffusion is proposed in view of the theoretical critique made in the previous chapter, and the operational difficulties of applying the model to this particular case. This adaptation involves the consideration of two dimensions of organisational penetration and diffusion: the territorial (or vertical) dimension, as proposed by Panebianco, in which the relation between centre and periphery is emphasised, and the factional (or horizontal) dimension, in which the ideological identities and political objectives of elite members of the UCD coalition are considered. The analysis will be focused on two basic levels: the level of the national party elite in Madrid and the way in which the original coalition was formed, and the establishment of the party's provincial presence in its initial phase. Particular attention will also be paid to the evolution of Adolfo Suárez's remarkable leadership position in the 1976-77 period.

### **2. The transition to democracy in Spain: The appearance of a political leader**

#### **2.1. The State left by Franco**

The transition to democracy in Spain<sup>1</sup> was conditioned and facilitated by the profound

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<sup>1</sup> For reasons of space rather than of relevance this thesis only discusses the nature of the Spanish transition to democracy to the extent that it contributes to this analysis of UCD. It therefore assumes a certain background knowledge of the political circumstances of this period. Some examples of the very ample literature on this subject are: Andrés de Blas, Ramón Cotarelo, José Félix Tezanos (eds.), La transición democrática española, Op.cit. (contains a thorough bibliographical review); Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi, Spain: From dictatorship to democracy, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1980; (for a Marxist interpretation) Richard H.Chilcote et al, Transition from dictatorship to democracy. Comparative studies of Spain, Portugal and Greece, New York, Taylor and Francis, 1990; David Gilmour, The transformation of Spain. From Franco to the Constitutional Monarchy, London, Quartet Books, 1985; José María Maravall, La política de la transición,

socio-economic transformation of Spain in the 1960s and 1970s. This transformation had created a new urban proletariat, principally in Madrid, Catalonia and the Basque Country, whose strikes and demonstrations constituted a strong pressure for reform, particularly from 1974 onwards<sup>2</sup>. But it had also created a broad and modern middle-class - a "constituency for capitalism", for whom "democracy was acceptable, even desirable, provided that financial security and private property (with cars and seaside holidays) could be preserved"<sup>3</sup>. The economic expansion of the 1960s permitted a kind of "relegitimisation" of the Franco regime, but also vastly changed the social reality of Spain, a change which was not matched by an appropriate evolution of its political structures<sup>4</sup>. These transformations revealed the inefficiency and immobilism of the Spanish State, whose weakness was patent to those who assumed political responsibility after Franco's death<sup>5</sup>. They also revealed it to be incapable of maintaining political order, as demonstrated by the rapid growth of political violence in the 1970s, particularly in the Basque Country.

The transition process has been analysed in terms of these socio-economic changes as a shift in the coalition of social forces legitimising the State: Lancaster and Prevost argue that the democratisation process represented a change from a business-military coalition to a business-labour coalition<sup>6</sup>. However, this view seems to underestimate the extent to which the transition process was also a process of institutional change promoted from within the State itself. The achievement of a business-labour coalition, in practical terms, implies a level of institutionalisation of forms of interest articulation which 1970s Spain lacked. Amando de Miguel has argued that the State was the motor of capitalism in Spain, and that the genuine

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Madrid, Taurus, 1982; Paul Preston, The triumph of democracy in Spain, London, Methuen, 1986; Geoffrey Pridham (ed.), The new Mediterranean democracies. Regime transition in Spain, Greece and Portugal, London, Frank Cass, 1984; Donald Share, The making of Spanish democracy, New York, Praeger, 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Maravall emphasises the importance of this factor in La política de la transición, Op.cit., and Dictadura y disenso político, Madrid, Alfaguara, 1978.

<sup>3</sup> Nancy Bermeo, "Redemocratisation and transition elections. A comparison of Spain and Portugal", Comparative Politics, Vol.19, N.2, January 1987, pp.213-231 (p.224).

<sup>4</sup> Jorge de Esteban and Luis López Guerra, La crisis del Estado franquista, Barcelona, Labor, 1977.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, June 1992. Interviews cited in this way refer to those carried out by the author (see Appendix).

<sup>6</sup> Thomas D.Lancaster and Gary Prevost (eds.), Politics and change in Spain, London, Praeger, 1985, pp.1-10.

ruling class was not the financial or military elite, but in fact the administrative elite<sup>7</sup>. The funcionariado used its control over political power to achieve economic power, and as Mella Márquez has argued, "a partir de 1976, y durante algunos años, el Estado continuó gozando de bastante autonomía frente a los grupos de interés"<sup>8</sup>. These considerations are particularly important for the creation of a political force whose initial dominant coalition was a sector of the Spanish administrative and governmental elite, as it indicates that there was considerable scope for this political force to develop high degrees of autonomy from external sponsor organisations. While recognising the importance of social pressures, this analysis of the transition takes a largely institutional perspective: the transition was a response from within the institutions to a crisis of the State, although this crisis was the result of both endogenous and exogenous factors<sup>9</sup>.

## 2.2. The King and the appointment of Adolfo Suárez as President of the Government<sup>10</sup>

A key aspect of the UCD genetic model is the role played by the Presidency in its creation. The driving force behind the creation of UCD was the Spanish Government, and in particular its President Adolfo Suárez: the Presidency, and the key ministers supporting the reform project, constituted a coherent central nucleus on which to base a political organisation. Important political resources were concentrated around this nucleus, and Suárez was able to build a powerful leadership position, despite the unpromising start to his Presidency.

The Government formed after Franco's death, under the same President, Carlos Arias Navarro was marked by the inclusion of Manuel Fraga, the most significant regime

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<sup>7</sup> Amando de Miguel, Sociología del franquismo, Madrid, Editorial Euros, 1975, p.89.

<sup>8</sup> Manuel Mella Márquez, "Los grupos de interés en la consolidación democrática", in Ramón Cotarelo (ed.), Transición política y consolidación democrática: España 1975-86, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1992.

<sup>9</sup> See for example Rafael López Pintor, "Mass and elite perspectives in the process of transition to democracy", in Enrique Baloyra (ed.), Comparing new democracies. Transition and consolidation in Mediterranean Europe and the Southern Cone, Op.cit., p.81-.

<sup>10</sup> I have been helped in my analysis of the circumstances surrounding Suárez's appointment by conversations with José Manuel Rivera Otero, whilst we prepared a joint paper on Suárez's leadership. Some of the points made here I owe to him.

"reformist", and José María de Areilza, a liberal monarchist who had formed part of the tolerated opposition to Franco<sup>11</sup>. Fraga dominated the new Government, and promoted gradual and limited reform from above, with the maintenance of a tough law and order policy: the reform aimed at "evitar toda idea de ruptura o simplemente de carácter constituyente general", excluding the "grupos irreconciables (...) de carácter terrorista, comunista y separatista" and "dar satisfacción a los que desean una rápida solución al problema de la legitimidad y del ensanchamiento de la base"<sup>12</sup>. This Government survived only six months of growing tension and uncertainty, and its failure to promulgate even the most limited reform accentuated the crisis of the State. Fraga's project of political reform proved unviable as workers' mobilisation, particularly in the Basque Country, led to violent clashes with the security forces. The increasing polarisation between nostalgic Francoists (such as Arias) and the opposition threatened a grave crisis, and the first post-Franco Government was held responsible<sup>13</sup>.

The King forced Arias' resignation and (in collaboration with Torcuato Fernández Miranda, the President of the Cortes<sup>14</sup>) replaced him with the relatively little known Suárez, a junior minister in the Arias Government. This choice was regarded by most as a blow for reform, since there was little in Suárez's biography to indicate that he could transform the increasingly unstable Francoist State into a democracy<sup>15</sup>. He was a politician with no experience of the highest political office, and without a significant political base within the regime, unlike figures such as López Rodó, Silva, Fraga, and Fernández Cuesta, who could each command the support of considerable numbers of parliamentarians or senior functionaries<sup>16</sup>. Within the regime Suárez was regarded at best as a competent bureaucrat,

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<sup>11</sup> Santiago Míquez González, La preparación de la transición a la democracia en España, Zaragoza, Universidad de Zaragoza, 1990, pp.186-187.

<sup>12</sup> Policy document circulated by Fraga 2 January 1976. Cited in Juan Antonio Ortega Díaz-Ambrona, "Fraga y Suárez ante la transición", in Diario 16, Historia de la transición, Madrid, Diario 16, 1984, pp.234-5.

<sup>13</sup> Míquez González, La preparación de la transición, Op.cit., pp.190-191.

<sup>14</sup> See Josep M.Colomer, El arte de la manipulación política. Votaciones y teoría de juegos en la política española, Barcelona, Anagrama, 1990, Chapter 4.

<sup>15</sup> An important source of information on Suárez's career in the Franco regime is the highly critical biography written by Gregorio Morán, Adolfo Suárez. Historia de una ambición, Barcelona, Planeta, 1979.

<sup>16</sup> See for example Lourdes López Nieto, AP: estructura y evolución electoral de un partido conservador, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1986, pp.18-21.

although he had occupied several relatively senior posts: he had been Civil Governor of Segovia, Vice-Secretary General of the Movimiento<sup>17</sup>, Director General of Spanish Television, and Minister for the Movimiento under Arias. He was also President of the Unión del Pueblo Español, a "political association"<sup>18</sup> established under the effective leadership of Carlos Herrero Tejedor, his first political "sponsor". His performance in the Arias Government increased his political prestige: he competently handled a public order crisis in Vitoria in the Minister of the Interior's absence, and made a brilliant defence of the Government's Law on Political Associations in the Cortes. However few politicians and observers considered Suárez as a potential President, still less for such a grave political crisis.

As well as lacking authority among political leaders both within the regime and in the opposition, Suárez was practically unknown to the Spanish public<sup>19</sup>, a fact which emphasised his political weakness. Suárez's entire political preparation had taken place within the Movimiento, and there was little evidence of deep commitment to democracy<sup>20</sup>, so his appointment was unlikely to appease the opposition to the existing regime. The fact that he had been appointed by Franco's successor, King Juan Carlos I, according to the arrangements left by the dictator, gave him a certain institutional inertia for supporters of the regime. This meant that despite the overwhelmingly negative reactions, from all quarters, to his appointment<sup>21</sup>, he had at least the passive support of the large "apolitical" sector whose apathy had maintained the dictatorship. But Suárez had no credibility for the increasingly

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<sup>17</sup> For an explanation of the function of the Movimiento in the Franco regime see Juan Linz, "From Falange to Movimiento-Organización: The Spanish single party and the Franco regime, 1936-1968", in Samuel P. Huntington and Charles H. Moore (comps.), Authoritarian politics in modern society. The dynamics of established one-party systems, New York, Basic Books, 1970, pp.128-203; Amando de Miguel, Sociología del franquismo, Op.cit., pp.185-204.

<sup>18</sup> In early 1975, when the UDPE was formed, political parties were still illegal, although political associations were permitted under the aegis of the Movimiento.

<sup>19</sup> See Carlos Huneeus, La Unión de Centro Democrático y la transición a la democracia en España, Op.cit., pp.89-90.

<sup>20</sup> According to Preston, most regime politicians regarded Suárez as "fundamentally reactionary": The triumph of democracy in Spain, Op.cit., p.87. He has also been described as a "falangista tipo, obsesionado por las cuestiones de la revolución pendiente, la eficacia del aparato del Estado y la justicia social a su manera. En él se dan como en muy pocos otros políticos españoles las condiciones del declasado" (Juan Luis Cebrián, La España que bosteza. Apuntes para una historia crítica de la transición, Madrid, Taurus, 1980, p.38).

<sup>21</sup> For example, the article by Ricardo de la Cierva, "¡Qué error, qué inmenso error!", El País, 8 July 1976, which predicted that Suárez's Government would fall in a matter of months.

impatient sectors of the democratic opposition calling for political change, and neither did he have any close links with business sectors<sup>22</sup>. Suárez's appointment can be explained in terms of the influence of Fernández Miranda, who knew him through his involvement in the Movimiento<sup>23</sup>, and his good relationship with the King<sup>24</sup>. He was appointed by the King in order to initiate a democratisation process by which the latter could strengthen the legitimacy of his claim to the throne. Suárez was the ideal instrument for this strategy: a young and dynamic politician who had no democratic credibility and had limited political resources of his own. He was a "puro ejecutivo (...), una personalidad flexible, que aceptase los consejos"<sup>25</sup>, and was expected to follow the instructions of his political sponsors. In the initial phase of his Presidency, Suárez had very little autonomy, and was largely dependent on the King and his advisors. Therefore the foundations on which Suárez's political leadership were built were remarkably fragile; indeed it can be argued that this fragility was the only reason he was appointed. This leadership became the driving force behind the creation of UCD, and its instability was a factor which worked against the party's consolidation.

### 2.3. The political reform of the Suárez Government

In the exceptional circumstances of the post-Franco period, Suárez managed to acquire a very powerful position in only a few months. The operation set in motion by Adolfo Suárez's Government between July 1976 and June 1977 has been described as "reconciling the irreconcilable"<sup>26</sup>, since it resolved a political deadlock between two mutually hostile positions that threatened to become a violent confrontation. Since Franco's death, political debate amongst those favouring some kind of democratisation had centred around two

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<sup>22</sup> Miquez González, La preparación de la transición, Op.cit., p.202. In fact, Suárez's Movimiento past meant he was potentially hostile to business sectors, in the view of one observer: "Padece - o disfruta, según se mire - de todos los sentimientos populistas que anidan en este país, lo que le distancia más y más de las clases dirigentes de la economía y de las finanzas": Juan Luis Cebrián, La España que bosteza, Op.cit., p.38.

<sup>23</sup> Fernández Miranda, who had been the King's tutor, was President of the Cortes and of the Council of the Realm, which gave him a key position in the process of selection of candidates for the Presidency to be presented to the King.

<sup>24</sup> See Morán, Historia de una ambición, Op.cit., p.32.

<sup>25</sup> Miquez González, La preparación de la transición, Op.cit., p.202.

<sup>26</sup> Preston, The triumph of democracy in Spain, Op.cit., p.91.

concepts: reforma (reform) and ruptura (break)<sup>27</sup>. The former, represented particularly by Manuel Fraga, would involve a gradual concession of liberties and representative rights through the strictest Francoist legality, with strong emphasis on institutional continuity and the maintenance of public order. The latter, represented by the opposition forces (particularly Socialists, Communists and opposition Christian Democrats), would mean the immediate constitution of a provisional government to dismantle the Francoist state and establish full democracy. The great success of the Suárez Government was to achieve a synthesis of these two strategies based on the principle of consensus. This has been described as a ruptura pactada, or a "estrategia rupturista gradual desde la legalidad franquista"<sup>28</sup>, since full democratisation was indeed achieved (Fraga's reforma would have excluded "communists" and "separatists" from political life). However it has also been described as a reforma pactada<sup>29</sup>, since the break with legality demanded by the democratic opposition was avoided. The strategy involved several secret meetings with opposition leaders in an attempt to gain their approval of his plans, and convince them of his democratic intentions. At the same time Suárez sought to reassure the Army and other hardline elements that his Government would bring in the limited reform necessary to stabilise the political situation without creating an institutional vacuum. In this way he was able to win support amongst opposition sectors who saw this project as a possible means of achieving political reform and the legalisation of party political activity, whilst maintaining the pretence of regime continuity.

The Law for Political Reform, elaborated by Minister of Justice Landelino Lavilla, was the juridical vehicle of Suárez's strategy<sup>30</sup>. The Law had the juridical status of a Fundamental Law of the existing regime, and yet its content provided for free elections and the dismantling of the Francoist Constitution. Its most important clauses were the election of the Lower House through proportional representation, the possibility of referenda called by the Monarch, and the acceptance of the notion of popular sovereignty. The Law was

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<sup>27</sup> See Luis García San Miguel, Teoría de la transición. Un análisis del modelo español 1975-78, Madrid, Editora Nacional, 1981.

<sup>28</sup> Raúl Morodo, La transición política, Madrid, Tecnos, 1984, p.101.

<sup>29</sup> See García San Miguel, Teoría de la transición, Op.cit.

<sup>30</sup> For a juridical critique of the Law for Political Reform, see Pablo Lucas Verdú, La octava ley fundamental, Madrid, Tecnos, 1976; Lucas Verdú describes the law as "cross-eyed", since it appeared to offer both reforma and ruptura.

characterised by a high degree of ambiguity - although it paved the way for a democratically elected Congress with power to initiate constitutional reform, it contained no clause derogating the other Francoist Fundamental Laws - which enabled Suárez to present it before the Francoist Cortes as a responsible reform which would not lead to the chaos of party democracy, while privately persuading the opposition that it would permit real democratisation<sup>31</sup>. The passing of the Law for Political Reform with the necessary two thirds majority was a remarkable achievement: the Francoist Cortes voted themselves out of existence.

This vote, and the referendum on the Law for Political Reform held on 15 December 1976, were key political successes for Suárez, and made him a powerful leadership figure. Despite the campaign against participation led by the Socialists and Communists, a massive "Yes" vote showed that the Spanish people was overwhelmingly in favour of the reform project. The result of the referendum - 77% of the electorate voted, of which 95% voted "Yes" - was interpreted as a personal triumph for Suárez, and placed him in a strong position. His popularity, as reflected in opinion polls, grew from his initial 32% on his appointment, to 67% after the success of the referendum<sup>32</sup>. The levels of support for the political reform project were very high, even amongst voters on the left<sup>33</sup>.

The successful conclusion of this first phase enabled Suárez to begin broadening the political arena and integrating the opposition forces into the process of transition. This was achieved through a progressive loosening of restrictions of party political activity, culminating in the legalisation of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) at Easter 1977. The importance of this episode is explained by Share: "There is no greater example of the influence of a single leader in the course of Spanish politics than Adolfo Suárez's surprise legalisation of the Spanish Communist Party. (...) Suárez emerged from the PCE legalisation with renewed

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<sup>31</sup> According to Rafael del Aguila, the Law for Political Reform was a "hinge law" (*Ley bisagra*) which reflected the ambiguity of the *reforma-ruptura* dialectic; the Law was a reform which led subsequently to a *ruptura* (the Constitution of 1978), without explicitly breaking with Francoist legality. See his article "La transición democrática en España: reforma, ruptura y consenso", *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 25, enero-febrero 1982, pp.107-127.

<sup>32</sup> José Ramón Saiz, *Los mil días del Presidente*, Madrid, 1979, p.319. I owe this point to José Manuel Rivera.

<sup>33</sup> See Juan Linz et al, *Informe sociológico sobre el cambio político en España 1975-1981. IV Informe FOESSA, Vol.1*, Madrid, Euramérica, 1981, p.90.



confidence and the momentum necessary for his subsequent 'occupation' of the political centre"<sup>34</sup>. This decision reflects the strengthening of Suárez's position after the success of the Law for Political Reform. The opposition within the regime right, and particularly within the Armed Forces, was fierce and the Minister for the Navy, Pita da Veiga, resigned. But the military's reluctant acceptance of the legalisation shows the extent to which Suárez's political authority had been consolidated since his appointment, and the democratic commitment of the decision increased his popularity amongst opponents of Francoism<sup>35</sup>.

One of his original critics wrote in 1978 that "el Presidente tiene al país encandilado"<sup>36</sup>. Suárez had overcome the opposition of important sectors of the regime and had imposed his project of democratisation, achieving massive popular support, confirming his national political leadership and placing himself in a very advantageous position in the run-up to the first free elections of the post-Franco period. In March 1977, a poll found that 28% of Spaniards would vote for Suárez if he presented himself as a candidate in their province, more than twice as many as for Felipe González, and three times as many as José María de Areilza, one of the most prestigious candidates of the democratic right<sup>37</sup>. As Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo<sup>38</sup> explains, "Suárez, a finales de 1976 y en 1977, sentía el apoyo directo del pueblo, que le llegaba sin el intermediario de un partido"; this support can be described as a legitimacy which bypassed the institutions and was centred on the individual himself. To use Tucker's terminology, Suárez enjoyed a period of situational charisma<sup>39</sup>; he was perceived as having saved the country from a grave political crisis.

Therefore Suárez was in a position to build up a strong and highly personalised leadership, controlling key political resources. However, his career in the regime, and position as President proposed by the Francoist Council of the Realm and nominated by Franco's

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<sup>34</sup> Share, The making of Spanish democracy, Op.cit., p.126.

<sup>35</sup> According to the opinion polls cited earlier, Suárez's popularity rating grew further, to 77%, after the legalisation of the PCE (José Ramón Saiz, Los mil días del Presidente, Op.cit., p.319).

<sup>36</sup> José Jiménez Blanco, De Franco a las elecciones generales, Madrid, Tecnos, 1978, p.174 (cited in Share, The making of Spanish democracy, Op.cit., p.126).

<sup>37</sup> Share, The making of Spanish democracy, Op.cit., p.133.

<sup>38</sup> Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Barcelona, Planeta, 1990, p.56.

<sup>39</sup> Robert C.Tucker, "The theory of charismatic leadership", Op.cit.

constitutional successor, deprived him of the democratic credibility necessary to survive as President after the completion of political reform. With the preparations for free elections, called for 15 June 1977, the political situation, and the requirements for the perpetuation of Suárez's national political leadership, changed considerably - it became necessary to reinforce this highly personalised leadership with organisational foundations in order to secure a parliamentary presence. Through the strong growth in his popularity and the success of his attempts to bring reform without a breakdown of the State structure, Suárez had acquired the dominant position in the exchanges of political resources within the emerging political system. In the run-up to the first general elections Suárez had the key electoral resource of personal popularity as a result of his successful leadership of the initial period of the transition. This resource, if fully exploited, would provide Suárez with the kind of parliamentary support necessary to permit him to remain President after democratic elections.

Moreover, Suárez and his Interior Minister Rodolfo Martín Villa had control of important resources inherent in the structure of the State, which was still fundamentally the State left by the Franco dictatorship. This control consisted of the network of communications between the centre and the periphery articulated by the Movimiento and the Gobernadores Civiles (Civil Governors - the provincial representatives of central government). The Movimiento, despite its political irrelevance, was an institution with a considerable bureaucratic presence throughout the State, and the career path chosen by many aspiring politicians. Suárez's background in the Movimiento provided him with numerous and influential contacts within the organisation, which could be used to articulate a nation-wide political presence in support of Suárez's candidature as President. The Civil Governors were the key political-administrative link between the government in Madrid and the provinces, and were appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, remaining in constant contact with the Minister. The functioning of these structures has been described in the following way:

(el Movimiento Nacional era) una organización política bastante completa, con unas redes provinciales extendidas a todos los pueblos y a todos los barrios, e incrustada en al Administración y en muchas organizaciones profesionales y ciudadanas. (...) En las cúpulas provinciales estaban los gobernadores civiles, nombrados por el ministerio de la Gobernación, que continuamente recibían instrucciones de él y que, en un Estado centralizado, tenían muchísimo poder real. El gobernador civil era el jefe provincial del Movimiento y transmitía las instrucciones que recibía de Madrid y las que él mismo concebía a los alcaldes de ciudades y pueblos, a los cuales había nombrado y podría cesar en cualquier momento, y los que, a su vez, además de alcaldes, eran jefes locales del Movimiento. (...) La

organización, pues, era bastante completa, y además sus integrantes estaban dotados de poder e introducidos en las esferas de las influencias, por lo que podían ofrecer a los demás ciudadanos la posibilidad de resolver los asuntos y expedientes que afectasen a los intereses particulares de cada uno, de este modo, sus resortes para inducir las opiniones públicas de sus conciudadanos eran enormes, sobre todo en los pueblos pequeños<sup>40</sup>.

In this way the Ministry could be used as the centre of the communications network at the service of the Presidency in order to meet the organisational challenge of creating a party or coalition with a presence throughout the State at election time. The President's experience of State Television (RTVE), and the Government's total control over this organisation, facilitated his dominance over the propaganda and publicity resources available. The situational charisma afforded Suárez by the success of his reform strategy was reinforced by concrete realities: his organisational advantages in establishing candidatures and running an election campaign.

The importance of these resources for electoral mobilisation can be seen in the negotiations with the centre-right forces from the reformist sectors of the regime and the moderate sectors of the opposition, which will be examined next. In contrast, these forces were totally lacking in organisational backbone, grass-roots presence and political projection<sup>41</sup>. Because of the weakness of the centre parties, Suárez, with his personal popularity and possession of key political resources, was able to condition the organisation of the political space between Fraga's conservatism and the Socialist and Communist opposition. The strong position of the Presidency was to mean that important features of the UCD genetic model were favourable to the party's autonomy and coherence. However the durability of these features was uncertain; Suárez's situational charisma, by definition, was the product of a set of circumstances which could easily change, returning the leader to the position of political weakness from which he had emerged.

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<sup>40</sup> José Ramón Calero, La construcción de la derecha española, Murcia, Editorial Prócer, 1985, pp.184-5.

<sup>41</sup> They became known as taxi-parties, because Joaquín Garrigues (leader of one such group, the Partido Demócrata) once claimed, after the expression used by Manuel Azaña in the Second Republic, that "mis bases caben en un taxi".

### **3. The formation of the UCD coalition: Elite negotiations and the factional dimension**

#### **3.1. The opportunity structure of the political arena before the elections of June 1977**

The formation of the UCD coalition was the result of the convergence of a series of short-term strategic interests of various political groups in a political context dominated by the figure of the President and his Government. The creation of UCD was a complex and tortuous process, whose analysis requires an understanding of the interplay of political intentions and political resources between these groups. Here I propose to analyse this process as an unequal exchange of political resources between a political entrepreneur - Suárez and his circle of ministerial allies - and various small groups and even individuals seeking to acquire power and influence within the political system, in order to represent certain interests and achieve certain political outcomes. This exchange took place within an opportunity structure dominated by electoral factors, and brought together groups with a variety of political projects, some totally autonomous from the Francoist establishment, whose only common denominator was that they approved of the basic aims and methods of the transition led by Suárez's Government.

The overwhelming "Yes" vote in the referendum for Political Reform was followed by a period of intense party activity in preparation for the democratic elections to be held in June 1977. Some parties which had existed before the dictatorship, for instance the PSOE, the PCE and the PNV, had survived the 40 years of clandestinity, although their organisational capacity, with the exception of the PCE, had been neutralised after the Civil War. The right of the political spectrum was represented by no serious political organisation, and the legalisation of political parties led to a proliferation of tiny groups led by prominent individuals, totally lacking, for the most part, in organisational resources. Over 100 political parties were registered at the Ministry of the Interior by early 1977<sup>42</sup>. This kind of proliferation of political groups is a common feature of post-authoritarian situations<sup>43</sup>, and carried great risks for the consolidation of an efficient democratic system, given the armed

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<sup>42</sup> Richard Gunther, Giacomo Sani, Goldie Shabad, Spain after Franco. The making of a competitive party system, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986, p.43.

<sup>43</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, "Tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies", in O'Donnell, Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds.), Transitions from authoritarian rule. Prospects for democracy, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, pp.57-64.

forces' suspicion of party democracy. The fragmentation of political "supply" was matched by an unpredictable "demand": the Spanish electorate, most of whom had never taken part in a free election, was not organised into clear and coherent patterns of ideological preferences. This is shown by the results of a FOESSA survey, in which 22 different preferences were expressed by electors, but only three of them obtained more than 10% of the intended votes<sup>44</sup>. Moreover, while 74% of those surveyed clearly stated their intention to vote in the approaching elections, 83% claimed that they had not thought about which party they would vote for<sup>45</sup>. These data reveal an impressive enthusiasm for political participation after 40 years of authoritarianism, matched by a potentially destabilising lack of political articulation, which was particularly marked amongst moderate conservative voters.

Another important characteristic of this electoral opportunity structure was the electoral system. The creation of UCD was conditioned by the opportunities and restraints inherent in an electoral system which was devised by members of the Suárez Government (most of them future members of UCD) on the basis of the Law for Political Reform, and established by Decree-Law in March 1977. The Decree-Law established a proportional system with several "correctives": a maximum limit of 350 deputies in the Lower House, the establishment of the province as electoral district (many provinces were too small for real proportionality to be respected) with a minimum number of seats for each province, and a minimum threshold of votes to obtain parliamentary representation<sup>46</sup>. As well as discouraging fractionalisation of the different political options, these correctives implied a substantial overrepresentation of rural areas over urban areas, thus favouring conservative options.

The imposition of an electoral system with majoritarian tendencies implied that small parties lacking in geographically concentrated support would be eliminated from the political stage. This determined political actors' strategic choices by imposing the search for alliances

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<sup>44</sup> Linz et al, IV Informe FOESSA, Op.cit., pp.165-166.

<sup>45</sup> Linz et al, Informe FOESSA, Op.cit., pp.165-166.

<sup>46</sup> Detailed analyses of the juridical content and political consequences of this law can be found in Dieter Nohlen, Sistemas electorales del mundo, Madrid, Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1981; Jorge de Esteban, El proceso electoral, Barcelona, Labor, 1977; Richard Gunther and Giacomo Sani, "¿Qué hubiera pasado si...? El impacto de la normativa electoral", in Juan Linz and José Ramón Montero (eds.), Crisis y cambio: partidos y electores en la España de los años 80, Madrid, Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1986; José Ramón Montero, Francisco J.Llera and Mariano Torcal, "Sistemas electorales en España: una recapitulación", Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas, N.58, April-June 1992, pp.7-56.

and ideological common ground, particularly in the moderate right political space, dominated by fractionalisation. The significance of this was that small parties occupying the same political space found themselves in a situation of interdependency, in that none of them had sufficient political resources to stand alone at the elections. This electoral arena would severely punish small parties which failed to establish broad electoral alliances with other groups. Moreover, as the elections approached, Suárez's domination of the centre and centre-right political space, through his control over immense resources for electoral mobilisation, meant that the small centre-right parties also found themselves in a situation of dependency on Suárez. An indication of his dominant leadership position is that he insisted, against the opposition of Alfonso Osorio, Minister of the Presidency, that the Decree-Law should establish the election of "closed" lists in which no preference could be expressed for individual candidates; in this way he was able to define the electoral opportunity structure in order to increase his control over his future parliamentary support<sup>47</sup>.

Suárez's domination of exchanges of political resources was enhanced by his autonomy with regard to the kinds of interest groups which could have conditioned the creation of a coalition in support of the Presidency. The "poderes fácticos" (the banks, Church, and Army) did not become deeply involved in the emergence of the Spanish party system. The Church hierarchy made clear from the beginning that it did not wish to sponsor a political party, as a statement of the Episcopal Conference shows:

La Iglesia no desea el poder político ni apoyar en él su acción pastoral. Y, por consiguiente, no entra en el juego de los partidos políticos. Más aún, deseamos que la Iglesia en cuanto tal, en conformidad con la doctrina conciliar y teniendo en cuenta nuestra experiencia histórica, se mantenga en una actitud de independencia respecto a los distintos partidos políticos<sup>48</sup>.

This apparently neutral attitude in practice favoured Suárez's domination of the centre-right political space by making a strong, autonomous Christian Democrat party unviable. The

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<sup>47</sup> As described in Alfonso Osorio, Trayectoria política de un ministro de la Corona, Barcelona, Planeta, 1980, p.271: "Argumenté que este sistema favorece las luchas intestinas, las zancadillas políticas y las intrigas a la hora de confeccionarse las listas electorales. (...) Pero Adolfo Suárez quería controlar las listas (...). Sencillamente, perdí la batalla".

<sup>48</sup> "Nota sobre la participación política", in Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal Española: 1965-83, Jesús Iribarren (ed.), Madrid, Editorial Católica, 1984, p.401.

Church felt its interests would be adequately defended by a party such as UCD<sup>49</sup> (which implied tacit support), but wished to avoid close relationships of any kind with political parties, therefore respecting UCD's organisational autonomy.

If the Church as an institution cannot be regarded as a sponsor organisation in the process of coalition-building which led to the creation of UCD, neither can business and financial sectors. As mentioned earlier, business interests had been so closely entwined with the State administration during the dictatorship that it was difficult to perceive them as a separate "interest group". As a result of this, in 1977 Spanish business sectors had only just begun the slow process of creating representative organisations to defend their interests, and were therefore in no position to act collectively in order to influence the organisation of the centre-right political space<sup>50</sup>. The absence of established employers' organisations meant that Suárez had an unusual degree of autonomy in founding a party which would represent the interests of large numbers of businessmen. The only serious threat to this autonomy was the need for UCD to raise finance for its election campaign. The Suárez Government established state financing for those parties which achieved parliamentary representation<sup>51</sup>, but this money was to be paid after the election, and therefore the major political parties had to seek credits from the banks. In fact, these credits were generally far greater than the amounts parties could hope to pay back on the basis of the state contributions, and it was generally accepted that they would not be paid back in full<sup>52</sup>.

Although the major Spanish banks did play the key role in financing the electoral campaigns of the main political parties, this was not necessarily a way of conditioning their behaviour once in Parliament. Most sources agree that UCD did not enter into a dependency relationship with the banks as a result of these financial contributions. For Rafael Arias Salgado,

Prácticamente todo está organizado en pólizas de crédito, y hay ayudas de algunas empresas, y de algunos empresarios

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>50</sup> Víctor Pérez-Díaz, The return of civil society. The emergence of democratic Spain, Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 1993, p.42.

<sup>51</sup> See Pilar del Castillo, La financiación de partidos y candidatos en las democracias occidentales, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1985.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

en particular, y de algún sector de empresas, como fueron las compañías eléctricas, que contribuían dinero importante. Pero nunca se aceptó condicionamientos (...). UCD fue extraordinariamente independiente de los poderes económicos, por voluntad explícita de Suárez<sup>53</sup>.

Finance was formally a constraint on UCD's organisational independence, but in practice, the financial contributions of banks and businesses did not require any particularly favourable treatment from an UCD Government in return. These sectors, shaken by the crisis emerging on the death of Franco, were grateful for the political stability the Suárez Government had achieved, and keen that this should be maintained through an UCD victory at the polls. Business sectors were particularly concerned that the left should not dominate the new Parliament, and the UCD, with the abundant resources for electoral mobilisation at its disposal, was generally seen as the best prospect for ensuring this would not occur. To this extent, business sectors were at least as dependent on UCD as UCD was on them. To conclude, the creation of UCD was not significantly influenced by any sponsor organisation, leaving its dominant coalition considerable initial autonomy.

### 3.2. The Centre: organisational diffusion

The concentration of political resources around the President and his key ministers was in marked contrast to the dearth and dispersal of such resources amongst the incipient political parties. The fractionalisation of the configuration of political options before the June elections was particularly acute in the political space which came to be known as the centre. The left, despite the creation of several new political parties, particularly of the extreme left, was to an extent articulated by the presence of two historic parties, which despite their weaknesses, could claim to have some political weight: the PSOE and the PCE. The neo-Francoist right was represented by Alianza Popular, led by Manuel Fraga and several other regime notables and enjoying considerable financial support. The wide ideological range between AP and the PSOE was occupied by a large number of organisationally weak taxi-parties, none of which appeared capable of hegemonising that political space. These parties were built around barons, or political notables, who needed to bolster their candidatures for high political office, and although some enjoyed limited financial backing, most were lacking resources of any

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<sup>53</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.



significance, financial or human<sup>54</sup>. Moreover, despite the obvious need for these groups to cooperate in order to achieve political power, they showed a conspicuous unwillingness to do so, leading to the failure of the attempts to create an effective centre coalition independently of the Suárez Government.

The issue of political reform compounded the potential ideological divisions between these groups. The moderate opposition to Franco, largely of Christian Democrat inspiration<sup>55</sup>, carefully cultivated an image of non-cooperation with the regime, despite the fact that its "historic" figures had, at some stage, collaborated with the reactionary right: Joaquín Ruiz Giménez had been Minister of Education in the 1950s and José María Gil Robles had done much to encourage the military to rise against the Second Republic. This movement, which in the 1970s formed a coalition known as the Equipo de la Democracia Cristiana del Estado Español, had a certain presence in the universities, and this youthful element, added to the leaders' attempts to distance themselves as much as possible from the dictatorship, led it to adopt a radical strategy involving cooperation with the left and support for the proposal of ruptura<sup>56</sup>. This group's ultimate refusal to collaborate with the Suárez Government would lead to its annihilation in the 1977 elections, an example of a group failing to act in function of the political opportunity structure described earlier.

The case of Equipo de la Democracia Cristiana was exceptional in its consequences, but other groups were similarly reluctant to ally themselves with the reformist sectors of the regime, despite the fact that in some cases their leaders had been associated with the regime in the past. This was particularly the case of the Social Democrats, whose historical leader, Dionisio Ridruejo, had been a prominent member of the Falange during and after the Civil War. On Ridruejo's death, this ideological current came to be represented by the Partido Socialista Democrático de España, the Partido Social Demócrata, and the Izquierda Social Democrática, who joined together in the Federación de Partidos Social Demócratas. This

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<sup>54</sup> Interviews with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992; Iñigo Cavero, July 1992; Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>55</sup> See Javier Tusell, La oposición democrática al franquismo, Barcelona, Planeta, 1977, for an insider's account of the origins of the Christian Democrat opposition.

<sup>56</sup> The two principal parties in the EDC, the Federación Democrática Popular (of Gil-Robles) and Izquierda Democrática (of Ruiz-Giménez), decided to join the Coordinadora Democrática, an opposition platform which included the PSOE, the PCE and several regionalist groups. See Javier Tusell, "The Democratic Center and Christian Democracy in 1977 and 1979", in Eusebio Mujal-León and Howard Penniman, Spain at the polls 1977, 1979 and 1982, Durham, Duke University Press, 1985.

organisation was dominated by Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, who up until 1974 had participated in the regime, reaching a very high level: he was head of the Instituto Nacional de Industria, a position regarded as being of equivalent importance to a ministry. Fernández Ordóñez resigned after the Arias Government abandoned its timid attempts at liberalisation, and, not unlike the Christian Democrats, moved quickly to the left in order to distance himself from his past, joining Coordinación Democrática<sup>57</sup>. The case of the Social Democrats reveals characteristics present in many centre groups in this period: a reluctance to cooperate with the regime (often in an attempt to compensate for earlier participation and acquire democratic credibility), and a number of small "parties" claiming to represent the same ideological position. These parties were useful as vehicles for the promotion of their leaders, but their lack of real political weight (particularly the ability to gather votes) made them useless in electoral terms.

Two other opposition groups are worth considering in this context. Several liberal parties had appeared in the 1970s, "most of them very small and held together by personal leadership"<sup>58</sup>. The Partido Liberal of Enrique Larroque originated from liberal sectors of the regime, but the Partido Demócrata Popular of Ignacio Camuñas and the Partido Demócrata led by Joaquín Garrigues had no clear links with the dictatorship. This latter party acquired considerable importance despite its small membership, largely due to the personality of its leader, and its proximity to financial interests<sup>59</sup>. Another group that acquired prominence in the centre was the Partido Popular Demócrata Cristiano, later Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC)<sup>60</sup> formed by Iñigo Cavero and Fernando Alvarez de Miranda, who left Ruiz-Giménez's Izquierda Democrática in protest at its leftward stance. The PPDC could also claim a clear conscience with regard to the dictatorship, as Alvarez de Miranda had been a

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<sup>57</sup> For an account of Fernández Ordóñez's political career, see his book La España necesaria, Madrid, Taurus, 1980.

<sup>58</sup> Tusell, "The Democratic Center and Christian Democracy in 1977 and 1979", *Op.cit.*, p.93.

<sup>59</sup> Tusell (*Ibid.*) states that "businessmen played an important role in its activities". See also Ramón Pi, Joaquín Garrigues Walker. Perfil humano y político, Madrid, 1977.

<sup>60</sup> The PDC was the result of the merger between the PPDC and the Unión Democrática Española of Alberto Monreal and Luis Angulo Montes (the Minister of the Presidency Osorio was also a member of the UDE leadership).

prominent figure in the moderate opposition since the contubernio de Munich<sup>61</sup> in 1962. Like the Liberals, it refused to court the left, and thus remained outside Coordinación Democrática.

The participation of Social Democrats, Liberals and Christian Democrats outside the EDC in the UCD project was the result of a slow process of articulation of the centre leading to the creation of a coalition called Centro Democrático (CD). The cooperation of CD with the Suárez Government became possible as it became clear to its component parties that democratic credentials without organisational structures and clear leadership would lead to electoral failure. The process by which UCD emerged from this coalition involved a further group, of a less clear-cut ideological identity, which reflected the ambiguities of the Spanish transition, both in its programmatic content and its response to the strategic dilemmas of the process of political change. This group, lacking a clear structural or personal demarcation, was active in arguing the case for reform in the conservative Catholic press under the pseudonym Tácito.

Tácito was neither a party nor a political association, but simply "el producto de una serie de concausas que conducen a un grupo de hombres a plantearse la necesidad de reflexionar sobre el contorno político y social en el que viven"<sup>62</sup>. Its activity consisted largely of the publication of articles proposing a careful but profound democratisation of the Franco regime, articles which appeared in the Catholic newspaper Ya under the pseudonym "Tácito". Its origins are to be found largely in the Asociación Católica Nacional de Propagandistas (ACNP), a Catholic lay organisation which had produced important members of the Franco elite - indeed most of the participants in Tácito were either high ranking State functionaries or diplomats<sup>63</sup>. Others, such as Cavero and Alvarez de Miranda, were involved in the moderate opposition to Francoism. In any case, no Tácitos were especially associated with the repressive nature of the regime, since until the Government of Adolfo Suárez none of them had held ministerial office. They belonged to what Huneus has described as the buffer zone:

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<sup>61</sup> A highly publicised meeting of anti-Franco dissidents who aimed at a monarchical restoration under the legitimate heir to the throne, Don Juan, who opposed the Franco regime. Alvarez de Miranda gives his account of the meeting, and his subsequent political activity, in Del contubernio al consenso, Barcelona, Planeta, 1985.

<sup>62</sup> Tácito, Madrid, Ibérico Europeo de Ediciones, 1975, p.19.

<sup>63</sup> Charles Powell, "The 'Tácito' group and the transition to democracy, 1973-77", in Paul Preston and Frances Lannon, Elites and power in twentieth century Spain. Essays in honour of Raymond Carr, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990, pp.249-268 (p.251).

Los titulares de la buffer zone no se encuentran en el 'interior' o 'fuera' del régimen; sencillamente ocupan posiciones de autoridad y poder en las cuales no es necesario hacer esta definición, pues sus tareas son consideradas 'técnicas' y no políticas; están al servicio del Estado y no de su régimen político y, menos aún, del gobierno<sup>64</sup>.

This view tends to exaggerate the political distance between senior functionaries and the Government of the Francoist State. This is an attempt to downplay the "political" nature of the *Tácitos*' involvement in the dictatorship, even though they held posts that were strictly speaking political appointments, approved by the dictator. The idea of a "buffer zone" is therefore in part a convenient rationalisation of some Christian Democrats' political involvement with the Franco regime<sup>65</sup>. A more balanced interpretation is made by Powell:

These sectors of the Francoist elite blurred the boundaries between those 'inside' and 'outside' the official political world (never very clearly defined in authoritarian regimes), which enabled them to exercise influence in both camps. During Franco's lifetime, these groups undermined the position of those within the ruling coalition who were opposed to democratic change by making the reformist alternative attractive to the sectors of Spanish society which had benefited most from the regime's existence. After his death, they provided leadership and an element of continuity which reassured these social groups and encouraged them to participate in the consolidation of the new democratic system<sup>66</sup>.

Rather than their supposedly pristine past with regard to the dictatorship, the importance of this group lay in their commitment to gradual, but profound democratisation of the political system, and their close contacts with members of the tolerated opposition. The significant participation of members of *Tácito* - Alfonso Osorio, Landelino Lavilla, Marcelino Oreja, Eduardo Carriles, Andrés Reguera - in Adolfo Suárez's first Government provided a link between the opposition centre parties and regime centrists that facilitated their cooperation in the UCD coalition. Nevertheless, before UCD was created, attempts were made to form a centrist coalition independent of the Government on the basis of opposition Liberals, Christian Democrats, Social Democrats and *Tácitos*. This process began with the creation of the Partido

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<sup>64</sup> Huneeus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.30.

<sup>65</sup> Indeed one Christian Democrat described *Tácito* as "la democracia cristiana colaboracionista", although this definition lacks the connotation normally associated with that word; interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>66</sup> "The '*Tácito*' group and the transition to democracy", p.247.

Popular in December 1976, under the leadership of Pío Cabanillas, who had been sacked from his post as Minister of Justice in 1975, and José María de Areilza, whose participation in the liberal-juanista opposition dated back to the contubernio de Munich. In January 1977, Tácito formally announced the integration of the group into the Partido Popular, creating an important presence of Tácitos in the elite of that party<sup>67</sup>.

Despite the christian democratic leanings of many members of Tácito, the PP could not be described as a Christian Democrat party: it also contained Liberals and Social Democrats. Tácito in fact did not aim at the creation of a christian democrat party, and stated its rejection of the idea of a confessional party in clear terms:

Dicho con honestidad, la mayoría de los hombres de Tácito son cristianos. Inevitablemente, su pensamiento está influido por esas creencias y por el espíritu que de ellas trasciende. Pero, con igual honestidad, conviene precisar que el grupo no es, en modo alguno, confesional, no obedece a ningún estímulo eclesial, no mantiene ningún vínculo directo o indirecto con la jerarquía<sup>68</sup>.

Christian democracy was the political inspiration of many of the politicians involved in this process, but the refusal of Tácito to assume christian democracy as a political project dimmed the ideological profile of the PP and facilitated the forging of links with other centre parties, permitting the participation of José María de Areilza, probably the most prestigious member of the opposition right at this time. Similarly, the Tácitos' proposal for a political party also involved a synthesis of different positions. Juan Antonio Ortega y Díaz-Ambrona, a Christian Democrat who became one of the founders of the Partido Popular, proposed

una síntesis "popular", plenamente desconfesionalizada, que enlace con el proyecto de Partido Popular Europeo, cuyos componentes no son todos democristianos, sino también centristas. (...) Esta síntesis debería permitir en las próximas elecciones una convergencia lo más estrecha posible de los partidos democristianos entre sí y con buena parte de los liberales y socialdemócratas<sup>69</sup>.

The idea of bringing together Christian Democrats, Liberals and Social Democrats was

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<sup>67</sup> Powell, "The 'Tácito' group and the transition to democracy", Op.cit., p.266-7.

<sup>68</sup> Tácito, Op.cit., p.28.

<sup>69</sup> Speech in the Club Siglo XXI, December 1976. See also "Extrañas alianzas", Ya, 2 April 1976.

therefore an idea expressed by TÁCITO even before the process of political change began. Particularly interesting is the claim that TÁCITO "no pretende excluir a nadie, ni por la generación a que pertenece ni por las posturas que mantuvo, sino agrupar a los que creen en la evolución democrática y desean llegar a una sociedad más justa, ordenada y pluralista"<sup>70</sup>. Thus the way was left open for those who had participated in the regime to join dissidents in a broad-based and ideologically heterogeneous party, of christian inspiration although not confessional, which would counterbalance the left and ensure a transition palatable to the right and the middle-classes in general. This should not be construed as implying that TÁCITO alone was responsible for UCD's creation. The ideas of consensus and cooperation amongst moderate forces were shared by other groups in the democratic opposition, as well as important regime figures such as Suárez. But the presence of the TÁCITOS at the heart of the Suárez Government provided personal contacts to ease the process.

The creation of the grand centre coalition to bring together the myriad of taxi-parties was the logical outcome of the convergence of democratic opposition and regime reformists. The electoral opportunity structure made these groups interdependent, in that their respective ideologies would, in practical terms, have to be expressed collectively or not at all. In spite of this, the creation of a coalition bringing together the various taxi-parties was characterised by intense conflict between their leaders<sup>71</sup>. The search for international recognition as the Spanish representative of their ideological current was an important objective of many Centre leaders since they felt this would increase their chances of building a real political organisation capable of winning elections. The importance of party leadership as a basis for political influence was another motive for failure to cooperate - many leaders did not want to lose their position as undisputed leader of a party, even if it was a taxi-party. It is also likely that the lack of experience of democratic politics played a part in this fractionalisation; political actors had to go through a phase of institutional learning in order to understand the way in which democratic party politics worked. In any case, uncooperative behaviour was the norm.

After negotiations between the PP and the Social Democrats and Liberals, the coalition

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<sup>70</sup> TÁCITO, *Op.cit.*, p.21.

<sup>71</sup> For instance the alliance between the Christian Democrat group Unión Democrática Española and the Partido Popular, which immediately threatened to break down and caused constant conflict; see Alfonso Osorio, Trayectoria política de un ministro de la Corona, *Op.cit.*, pp.291-299.

Centro Democrático was formed in January 1977. This was the first attempt by the centre leaders to act in accordance with the political opportunity structure, dominated by the forthcoming elections. The origins of Centro Democrático, a loosely articulated federation of small parties claiming different ideological inspiration, are characterised by a high level of organisational diffusion. The leader of the PP, Pío Cabanillas, admitted in an interview that this model of organisational development created many problems:

En Centro Democrático (...) lo que hay es un difícil acoplamiento de siete partidos para que actúen al unísono. Esos siete partidos tienen su autonomía, intentan mantener sus vinculaciones específicas, y eso hace menos ágil el mecanismo<sup>72</sup>.

The insistence of the component parties on retaining a certain autonomy in their political activity reduced the coherence of the CD coalition. It shows that despite an obvious interdependency for the purposes of achieving their political goals, cooperation did not emerge spontaneously, indeed there was much resistance to it. Given the absence of real political power within the coalition, there were neither office nor policy pay-offs to serve as a basis for negotiation, and the separate political identities of the parties and the ambitions of their leaders made them jealous of their independence. Since CD's "efficiency" in creating an electoral structure was in doubt, its participants could not be relied upon for effective commitment.

Not only did the coalition lack unity, it also lacked resources. As de Esteban and López Guerra have pointed out "los partidos de Centro Democrático se movían, por decirlo así, en el vacío: entre los dirigentes y la masa de electores no existía la maquinaria necesaria, la organización y los recursos que garantizasen una victoria electoral"<sup>73</sup>. An indication of these organisational difficulties was given by an attempt to hold a pre-electoral meeting in Alicante, which was a disastrous failure; only a handful of people turned up, suggesting a lack of real presence of the organisation, and the limited impact of its leaders on public opinion<sup>74</sup>. The taxi-parties had little money, few members, and their leaders, although well-known in

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<sup>72</sup> In Triunfo, 739, 26 March 1977, p.11.

<sup>73</sup> Jorge de Esteban and Luis López Guerra, Los partidos políticos en la España actual, Barcelona, Planeta, 1982, p.81.

<sup>74</sup> See Pedro J. Ramírez, Así se ganaron las elecciones 1977, Barcelona, Planeta, 1977, p.31.

elite circles in the capital, were largely unknown to the public. In the words of one member of Suárez's Government, "aunque estaban registrados como partidos, todavía no lo eran sino en embrión"<sup>75</sup>. Centro Democrático's inability to establish itself as a serious electoral force, and its organisational fragility, facilitated the President's domination of the centre space.

### 3.3. The coalition with Suárez: organisational penetration

The creation of Unión de Centro Democrático introduced an element of organisational penetration to the process of structuring the centre-right political space. This penetration consisted in the arrival of Adolfo Suárez as leader of the coalition and the imposition of his conditions, as a result of his dominant position in the exchanges of political resources.

Suárez had attempted to create his own party - the Federación Social Independiente (FSI) - in February 1977 through the structures of the Syndical Organisation, part of the Movimiento. This party, run ostensibly by Jesús Sancho Rof, one of Suárez's Movimiento contacts and close to Martín Villa, claimed a "centre-left" ideology, and proclaimed itself open to electoral pacts. The FSI was not particularly successful in negotiating with CD. However the presence of Unión Democrática Española within Centro Democrático permitted the Government to exert a certain influence on the coalition. Alfonso Osorio, one of Suárez's most important collaborators, was also a leading figure in the UDE. In one of the most famous episodes of the transition, Osorio pointed out to the leaders of PP at a dinner in March 1977 that the presence of José María de Areilza as de facto presidential candidate of the party was an obstacle to any cooperation with the Government<sup>76</sup>. This led to Areilza's total marginalisation from the coalition's activity, demonstrating the extent to which Suárez's dominant position in the political game allowed him to influence the strategic choices of other political actors. The leaders of the PP had understood that they would need the Government's help if they were to get into Parliament and therefore accepted such a flagrant intervention in the internal affairs of the party. This was the prelude to Suárez's taking over the coalition in May 1977.

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<sup>75</sup> Interview C41 (the interviews classified in this way were carried out by Professor Richard Gunther of Ohio State University - see Appendix).

<sup>76</sup> See José María de Areilza, Cuadernos de la transición, Barcelona, Planeta, 1983, pp.110-114; Alfonso Osorio, Trayectoria política de un ministro de la Corona, Op.cit., pp.301-304.



In order to understand the nature of the power relationship established within the emerging UCD coalition, it is useful to examine the resources available to the various actors. The abundance of resources for electoral mobilisation controlled by Suárez put the President in a very strong position. In effect, this meant he was free to choose his allies, as one UCD leader makes clear:

CD al final sirve de pista de aterrizaje de Suárez. Que tenía esa posibilidad o tenía otras, hubiera podido hacer un partido con fuerzas del Movimiento, con la UDPE o independientes etc. El opta por apoyarse por fuerzas emergentes y no por fuerzas declinantes<sup>77</sup>.

This freedom of action was not shared by the taxi-parties of CD, as one of its leaders recognises:

Nosotros considerábamos a Suárez como el "arcángel" que vendría desde el cielo a ayudarnos, a poner orden entre nuestras divisiones de CD. (...) Y sabíamos que teníamos que pactar con el poder porque la debilidad de nuestras estructuras nos impedía organizarnos para las elecciones<sup>78</sup>.

This vision of Suárez descending from the heavens is a striking indication of the way in which his dominant position was perceived by the CD barons. However the exchange of political resources was not entirely one-sided. CD could offer a number of prestigious politicians with a democratic pedigree and the ability and competence to fulfil ministerial duties, as well as in some cases contacts with financial circles which could facilitate party funding. The governmental nucleus directing the operation also needed to confirm the democratic credibility of the reform process by standing for election with figures who had been involved in the opposition to Franco. The CD parties "offered Suárez a handful of valuable names, the basis of future party cadres, a certain amount of experience and, above all, a centrist image, which both Suárez and his ministers lacked"<sup>79</sup>. Certainly had Suárez stood for President at the head of a group of ex-Movimiento bureaucrats the electoral process would have been open to criticism and suspicion of authoritarian manoeuvrings. That Suárez

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<sup>77</sup> Interview C36.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, June 1992.

<sup>79</sup> José Amodia, "Union of the Democratic Centre", in David Bell (ed.), Democratic politics in Spain: Spanish politics after Franco, London, Pinter, 1983, pp.1-28.

was aware of this risk clearly emerges from a speech he made on television to announce he would be standing in the elections:

Al tomar esta decisión la gran dificultad estriba en hacer compatible mi presentación como candidato con el ejercicio de las funciones de Presidente del Gobierno. (...) Pero ello no impedirá que las elecciones sean absolutamente libres, transparentes y claras<sup>80</sup>.

This is confirmed by UCD leaders interviewed by Richard Gunther<sup>81</sup>, who emphasised the importance of the international connections that some CD leaders had forged.

But to the extent that a dependency relationship existed, the CD parties were evidently dependent on Suárez for access to resources for electoral mobilisation. These resources were essentially the figure of a popular presidential candidate<sup>82</sup>, the access to the infrastructure of the State, the control of the audiovisual media and access to opinion polls<sup>83</sup>. Even the democratic legitimacy of the CD leaders was in part eclipsed by the success of Suárez's Government in initiating the democratisation process. The agreement which created UCD was negotiated between the ex-Minister for Public Works Calvo Sotelo and the leaders of CD, and was signed by the leaders of 15 parties, mostly Social Democrat, Liberal, Christian Democrat and regionalist groups, three of which later withdrew<sup>84</sup>. The power relation behind this agreement is indicated by a statement attributed to Calvo Sotelo: "Tendréis que firmar

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<sup>80</sup> "Contrastar con el voto una obra de Gobierno". *El País*, 5 May 1977, p.10. The *El País* editorial that day spoke of "Un poder aún omnipresente que acude a las elecciones sin ni siquiera dar al resto de los candidatos la oportunidad de contestar al presidente del Gobierno que puede seguir su campaña electoral a golpes de Boletín Oficial del Estado" (5 May 1977, p.6).

<sup>81</sup> Interview C44, part of which is reproduced in Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", *Op.cit.*, p.440.

<sup>82</sup> A poll commissioned by *El País* found that Suárez was by far the most popular politician in the country, with a popularity rating of 58%; no other leader of the Centre achieved a significant rating ("Suárez, el político más popular seguido, a distancia, por Felipe González", *El País*, 11 May 1977, p.12). Equally significantly, the same poll found that voters identified predominantly with the national, rather than local, party leaders, a fact which emphasises the importance of Suárez's electoral resources in comparison with those of other UCD candidates ("Ningún partido monopoliza una clase social", *El País*, 28 May 1977, p.11).

<sup>83</sup> As Kenneth Medhurst states, "Suárez's control over the State apparatus, apart from initially leaving him with the political initiative, gave him control over sources of information denied to his competitors. In particular his capacity to monitor the state of public opinion was to prove especially significant when it came to outmanoeuvring opposition parties" ("Spain's evolutionary pathway from dictatorship to democracy", in Pridham (ed.), *The new Mediterranean democracies*, *Op.cit.*, p.36).

<sup>84</sup> For a full list, see Huneus, *La Unión de Centro Democrático*, *Op.cit.*, p.163.

documentos que no son negociables"<sup>85</sup>. The centralisation of political resources around the figure of Suárez is reflected in the founding document of the UCD coalition, which stated that Centro Democrático was to become the political vehicle of the incumbent President, its principal objective being "apoyar en las próximas Cortes la política del Presidente Suárez en la consolidación de una democracia estable en España"<sup>86</sup>.

The key to the penetration of the coalition from the Presidency of the Government was the inclusion of a large number of Independents on the UCD electoral lists. These Independents were individuals linked to Suárez or the Minister of the Interior Martín Villa<sup>87</sup> either through personal acquaintance or through the operation of articulation of the coalition launched through the structures of the State and the Movimiento. Those who had participated in the Movimiento or the Francoist vertical syndicates were known as azules, the blue shirt being the uniform of the Movimiento. The presence of these Independents has been interpreted by Preston as "debts incurred by Suárez in the autumn of 1976 in the process of securing sufficient votes to ensure that the Francoist Cortes would approve his project of political reform"<sup>88</sup>. However it is also important to recognise that Suárez's control over the future UCD parliamentary group would depend on the presence of individuals loyal to him above and beyond any taxi-party or ideological label. A parliamentary group dominated by deputies selected by the leaders of the CD coalition would have been more difficult to control, and would have given the barones significant bargaining power in the decision-making process. This situation would have enabled them to retain the taxi-parties as a basis of negotiation, thus emphasising the autonomy of the component groups and the coalitional nature of the parliamentary group.

The arrival of the Independents was also made necessary by the patchy organisation of the CD parties. As Calvo Sotelo recalls, "había muchos candidatos para el número 1 en la lista en 25 provincias y luego no había candidatos para las demás provincias, el número 2 o

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<sup>85</sup> Pedro J. Ramírez, Así se ganaron las elecciones 1977, Op.cit., p.118.

<sup>86</sup> Cited in Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.162.

<sup>87</sup> Martín Villa's role in candidate selection is emphasised by Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.189.

<sup>88</sup> Preston, The triumph of democracy in Spain, Op.cit., p.112.

3 o 4 faltaban, y no se ponían de acuerdo"<sup>89</sup>. The CD parties barely had enough members between them to compile full lists in 52 constituencies, and evidently further help was needed. The Independents, most of whom emerged from the State bureaucracy or the Movimiento, formed part of a network that covered the whole of the Spanish territory, and could therefore provide UCD with candidates and basic structures in those areas where the CD parties had no presence<sup>90</sup>. Moreover, Suárez and his ministerial colleagues were aware that the administrative experience of the Independents would be essential for governing a sensitive transition period; as one UCD leader pointed out, "tampoco era posible improvisar con hombres completamente nuevos la administración del Estado en el año 1977"<sup>91</sup>.

Beyond these pragmatic considerations, the significant presence of Independents was also an attempt to overcome the excessive diffusion of the coalition by centralising the control over an important zone of organisational uncertainty: the parliamentary majority on which Suárez's Presidency would depend. Several small "regionalist" parties were also included in the coalition, and these parties were linked to individuals unmistakably associated with the Franco regime: the Partido Gallego Independiente (PGI) and the Partido Social Liberal Andalúz (PSLA) were led by ex-Procuradores of the Francoist Cortes (José Luis Meilán Gil and Manuel Clavero Arévalo), and Acción Regional Extremeña (AREX) was founded by a Movimiento politician close to Martín Villa (Enrique Sánchez de León). The privileged positions accorded to some regionalists and Independents in the UCD lists infuriated the CD leaders, as many of "their" candidates were displaced as a result. Calvo Sotelo, weary of the inability of the CD parties to reach agreements on UCD candidatures, used an element of coercion to consolidate the position of the Independents, once again revealing the weakness of the CD parties' position:

Fue tan imposible los 2 o 3 primeros días llegar a acuerdos que yo decidí dar un golpe de mano dictatorial, porque el plazo para presentar candidaturas era muy corto. (...) Yo propuse que hubiese un solo apoderado, que era yo, para presentar listas en las 52 provincias. En aquél momento los votos los tenía Suárez y yo representaba a Suárez, y por lo tanto no tenían más remedio que aceptar aquella condición<sup>92</sup>.

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<sup>89</sup> Interview with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, July 1993.

<sup>90</sup> Interview C44, cited in Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.442.

<sup>91</sup> Interview C41.

<sup>92</sup> Interview with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, July 1993.

The unease created by this move was expressed by Christian Democrat leader Alvarez de Miranda in an interview shortly after the foundation of the coalition:

No esperábamos a grupos como el de Meilán Gil o de Sánchez de Leon, ni a los hombres de Martín Villa. (...) Nosotros pensábamos que la hegemonía sería de los partidos políticos y que los hombres del presidente vendrían a reforzar la operación. (...) Nosotros participamos en la Unión de Centro con la idea de que ésta no pase de ser sino una simple coalición electoral. Yo no estoy de acuerdo con la trayectoria política de muchos de los hombres del Centro, pero estoy de acuerdo con la práctica política de Suárez. Aunque mantengo ciertas discrepancias, pienso que hay que ayudarle<sup>93</sup>.

This statement shows the extent to which the acceptance by the leaders of Centro Democrático of this "hijacking" of the coalition was conditional: they expected to dominate the coalition, or at least participate on equal terms, they did not intend the coalition to become a party, and in the last resort their continued involvement had much to do with their basic agreement with the reform programme set in motion by Suárez, and their electoral dependence on him. But this is one of many public statements in which CD leaders - especially Christian Democrats - insisted on their intention to maintain their political independence. It is particularly interesting that Alvarez de Miranda chose to express his discontent not with any ideological or programmatic elements of the coalition, but with the political careers of some of the Independents. This theme constantly recurred as an explanation of internal conflict in UCD: the difference between the types of professional and political background - in particular the question of involvement in or opposition to the Franco regime - of the members of the respective "ideological" groups. One of the founders of the PP, Emilio Attard, pointed out that the incompatibility of the Independents with his group was not ideological, but more a question of their attitude towards participation in politics:

Teníamos una profunda aprensión a los que, sin ideología, eran la viva esencia del pasado que pretendíamos sustituir. (Esto) tararía para siempre lo que debía ser un partido, porque estaba nutriéndose de hombres que carecían de ideas<sup>94</sup>.

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<sup>93</sup> In Triunfo, 747, 27 May 1977, pp.14-15.

<sup>94</sup> Emilio Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Barcelona, Planeta, 1983, p.52.

This romanticised recollection of the encounter between soulless Francoist technocrats and idealistic free spirits distorts the true picture. Attard and others were swiftly converted by the evidence that the "men without ideas" also offered a nation-wide infrastructure which none of the CD parties could match. The more reticent were persuaded by Suárez's Under-Secretary of the Presidency of the need to incorporate the State structure into the new project:

Curiosamente eran los socios extragubernamentales de UCD quienes más vehementemente clamaban por la extinción de la Secretaría General del Movimiento. Suárez me encargó que les hiciera ver su ingenuidad. Carecíamos de toda estructura electoral. Confesaban que no tenían ni siquiera interventores<sup>95</sup>.

UCD overcame its initial organisational weakness through a judicious use of the Civil Governors, the representatives of the centralised Franco State in the provinces, who provided information on possible candidates and gave logistic help with the organisation of the election campaign. The use of such a centralised structure facilitated presidential or governmental control over the process:

Las listas del 1977 se hicieron prácticamente la totalidad en la Presidencia del Gobierno. (...) Se recogió propuestas del partido pero al final, consultando un poco con los Gobernadores Civiles la imagen y perfil que tenían esas personas en sus provincias, y en función de eso se hicieron las listas<sup>96</sup>.

Unease over these methods did spill over into open conflict in some provinces<sup>97</sup>. Two prominent liberals linked to the juanista opposition, Enrique Larroque<sup>98</sup> and Antonio de Senillosa, left the coalition over their positioning in the lists, and the leader of Unión Democrática Española Luis Angulo Montes withdrew the PDC from the coalition in Granada in protest at the position of suarista Federico Mayor Zaragoza at the head of the list<sup>99</sup>. However for the most part the members of CD remained in the coalition, and with good

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<sup>95</sup> José Manuel Otero Novas, Nuestra democracia puede morir, Barcelona, Planeta, 1987, p.32.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>97</sup> "Fuentes tensiones en la Unión de Centro", El País, 7 May 1977, p.1.

<sup>98</sup> Larroque announced that "hemos llegado a la plena convicción de que hay una preeminencia absoluta del Gobierno en el Centro Democrático y que se han desvirtuado las esencias y los fines para los que se constituyó el Centro" ("Unión de Centro apurará el plazo de elaboración de las listas", El País, 8 May 1977, p.13).

<sup>99</sup> Cambio 16, 23-29 May 1977, p.24.

reason: most of the candidates proposed by the CD parties were indeed elected. The lists presented by UCD in the June elections for the Congress of Deputies included 130 Independents out of the 343 candidatures representing the coalition (38%)<sup>100</sup>. However, it is misleading to suggest that they were all given privileged positions in the UCD lists, as only 56 of the 165 elected UCD deputies were Independents, a smaller proportion (34%)<sup>101</sup>. This suggests that the CD parties had little to complain about. The lists initially proposed by the CD parties were largely respected, although conflict naturally emerged when more than one party had candidates for the same provincial lists<sup>102</sup>. The degree to which Suárez managed to tailor the lists to his taste can be gauged by looking at the selection of candidates at the head of each provincial list: the "Number 1" candidates were virtually guaranteed a seat, and were also given considerable control over the rest of the candidature<sup>103</sup>. Table 2.1. shows that almost half of the Number 1 candidates were proposed by Adolfo Suárez or some other member of the Government, in several cases despite the fact that a CD party had already proposed a different candidate.

Therefore the nature of the negotiations indicates that Suárez's Government, through its delegate Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, was able to dominate the process of candidate selection, while including a large number of CD candidates<sup>104</sup>. The limits to presidential penetration were set by the fact that the CD candidates could not be totally excluded without breaking the coalition (and losing the democratic credibility provided by CD), and by the fact that the Government too needed human resources. However the Government's intervention in candidate selection went way beyond what the CD leaders expected, as shown by Attard and Alvarez de Miranda's complaints cited earlier. The reasons for their remaining in the coalition are partly expressed in Alvarez de Miranda's claim that they wanted to contribute to the

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<sup>100</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.165.

<sup>101</sup> 43.1% of Independent candidates won a seat in the Congress of Deputies, whilst the general success rate of UCD candidates for the Congress was 48.3%.

<sup>102</sup> See the lists of proposed candidates presented by the taxi-parties in Osorio, Trayectoria política de un ministro de la Corona, Op.cit., pp.305-310. A cursory examination reveals that most of these candidates were indeed elected.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, July 1993.

<sup>104</sup> For confirmation of the active role of the Presidency in the process of candidate selection, see Alvarez de Miranda, Del contubernio al consenso, Op.cit., pp.125-129.

consolidation of the reform process initiated by Suárez. Moreover, the prospect of becoming a government coalition was especially attractive to the politicians involved in the taxi-parties, and this aim could only be served by remaining in Suárez's coalition. The ability of Suárez to offer a good chance of election to Parliament and probably governmental office, and the strong possibility of political oblivion for those centrists who chose to contest the elections independently of UCD, is the strategic explanation for the formation of the coalition under those terms. The imposition of such tough conditions by Suárez, and their acceptance by the barones, shows that both sides were aware of the political resources at their disposition, and the outcome reflected the resulting power relation. However the reluctance of some CD groups to dilute their ideological identity suggested that UCD's unity had fragile foundations.

#### **4. The organisation of UCD at provincial level: Territorial expansion through candidate selection**

##### **4.1. Penetration or diffusion?**

Having discussed the extent of presidential participation in the elite negotiations in Madrid, the aim of this section is to explain to what extent the party's territorial presence was established through governmental, or presidential, intervention. There is no uniform pattern to assist us in categorising the UCD genetic model as organisational penetration or diffusion; instead there is an interesting mixture of the two types. From a geographical or spatial point of view, most of the cases respond to the penetration type, as even in those areas dominated by the CD parties, the provincial branches of these parties were practically non-existent, and consisted of contacts in the region established by the Madrid barones. One of the possible indicators of the level of penetration - the number of candidates placed in an electoral district with which they have no link whatsoever - disproves the suggestion that UCD was not a national party, and that all of its candidates were members of the Madrid political elite. UCD in fact had the lowest number of both candidates and elected deputies who had been placed in an unfamiliar province of all the major parties: 4.1 % of candidates and 7.3 % of deputies, compared with 5.4 % and 11.9 % for the PSOE. 217 out of the UCD 343 candidates stood in provinces to which they were linked by both birth and residence, and 101 had at least one



of these ties<sup>105</sup>.

The coalitional nature of the UCD genetic model, and the importance of taxi-party affiliation for the future coherence of the organisation, suggest that the pure types of penetration and diffusion cannot adequately identify causes of internal friction. Therefore I will use a more complex typology of models of expansion to describe the varying degrees of penetration and diffusion present in the process of candidate selection, with the aim of analysing the power relations between the coalitional parties and the Suárez Government at the UCD's formation, and the consequences for the coherence of the UCD elite of different types of territorial expansion. This typology distinguishes between four degrees or presidential of governmental influence over candidate selection: direct government intervention, government intervention through a regional party, negotiated intervention, and coalitional domination. There are two main sources for this part of the study: the interviews of UCD officials made available by Professor Richard Gunther<sup>106</sup>, the biographical data on the deputies and senators elected in 1977 compiled by the Equipo de Documentación Política<sup>107</sup>, and other elite studies on candidates and deputies in the transition<sup>108</sup>. This data reveals the extent of Government intervention in the organisational implantation of UCD in the provinces, and, particularly, in the drawing up of the electoral lists, fundamental in determining candidates' chances of being elected.

This analysis is based on the assumption that the presence of Independents, closely associated to the Movimiento or other sectors of the Francoist State, in key positions on the UCD electoral lists is a good indicator of organisational penetration directed from the Government. Evidence of presidential or governmental influence in the selection of candidates

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<sup>105</sup> Lourdes López Nieto and Miguel A. Ruiz de Azúa, "Los candidatos de UCD, PSOE, PCE and AP a las elecciones generales de 1977 y 1979", Cuadernos de ciencia política y sociología, 17, June 1985, p.71.

<sup>106</sup> A series of interviews with local UCD leaders in various provinces in 1978 and 1979 (see Appendix). The author is very grateful to Professor Gunther for making the transcripts of these interviews available, since they constitute the only systematic attempt to gather information about the implantation of UCD at provincial level. It goes without saying that Professor Gunther bears no responsibility for the shortcomings of this analysis.

<sup>107</sup> Bernardo Díaz Nosty, Radiografía de las nuevas Cortes, Madrid, Sedmay, 1977.

<sup>108</sup> Salustiano del Campo, José Félix Tezanos and Walter Santín, "La élite política española y la transición a la democracia", Sistema, 48, May 1982; Mariano Baena del Alcázar and José María García Madaria, "Elite franquista y burocracia en las Cortes actuales", Sistema, 28, January 1979; María Luz Morán, "La clase parlamentaria española", Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 45, 1988; Quién es quién en las Cortes 1979-83, Madrid, Documentación Española Contemporánea, 1980.

representing coalitional parties can also be detected. The number of Independents elected, and the provinces for which they were elected, demonstrates the extent to which the Government was able to impose its candidates in different parts of the country, thus testing the validity of José Ramón Calero's description of this process of party-building:

la maquinaria del poder fue tremendamente eficaz. En las campañas electorales funcionaban a tope los teléfonos de los gobiernos civiles. Los alcaldes y pedaneos recibían y transmitían instrucciones a sus fieles y seguidores, y todos trabajaban por la UCD con el mismo entusiasmo, entrega y fidelidad que si se tratase de hacerlo por el anterior régimen<sup>109</sup>.

Government control over territorial branches enhanced the UCD leadership's ability to form a cohesive dominant coalition and establish a party organisation which legitimised this coalition.

The data presented here indicates that the President and his governmental allies were able to dominate the construction of the party in around half the provinces. In the rest of the country the CD parties were able to condition this penetration from the Government, and in some cases prevent it, leading us to define the territorial expansion of UCD as a case of mixed development with the emphasis on penetration, reflecting the dominant position of the Presidency, but also the importance of the resources controlled by the CD parties. In this sense the provinces can be divided into the four basic categories specified above: direct government intervention, government intervention through a regional party, negotiated intervention, and coalitional domination.

## 4.2. Government intervention in provincial party-building

### 4.2.1. *Direct government intervention*

The basic definition of direct government intervention is a majority of Independents amongst the elected UCD parliamentarians in a given province (in cases where there is an even distribution between Independents and CD candidates, the presence of an Independent as Number One on the party list can be regarded as indicative of government domination). In the cases of Barcelona, Granada and Segovia there is interview data to confirm that

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<sup>109</sup> Calero, La construcción de la derecha española, Op.cit., pp.185-6.

significant government intervention took place.

The province of Barcelona is a paradigmatic case of government intervention in the face of the coalitional parties' failure to establish any kind of organisational presence in the area. All five of the deputies elected on the UCD list were Independents who had not previously belonged to any political party (Carlos Sentís, Manuel Jiménez de Parga - who had been in the tolerated opposition, José de Espinet Chanco, Vicente Capdevilla Cardona, and Juan de Dios Ramírez de Heredia). According to a local official of the party in Barcelona, interviewed in July 1978:

One week before the formal closure of lists of candidates prior to the June election, Suárez acted boldly and suddenly and instructed an individual in the office of the civil governor to put together a party list for the UCD within 48 hours. This was a stroke of genius by Suárez, which succeeded brilliantly. (...) These decisions, however, were made entirely in Madrid<sup>110</sup>.

Cambio 16 reported at the end of May 1977 that Manuel Ortíz, the Civil Governor of Barcelona who had been Suárez's secretary earlier in his career, "ha jugado el papel dominante en la elaboración de las listas"<sup>111</sup>. Here presidential power was exercised by proxy through the Civil Governor, as the representative of the Government in the province. In this case, the balance of influence between Government and President on the one hand and coalitional parties on the other was totally skewed in the former's favour.

In Granada, a conflict arose as a result of Suárez's intervention. Alfonso Osorio had hoped to use his influence to place the PDC's Luis Angulo Montes first in the list for the Congress, but instead Suárez imposed one of his "hombres de confianza", Federico Mayor Zaragoza, rector of the University of Granada, although a Catalan by birth. This led to the Christian Democrats of the PDC abandoning the coalition in Granada because of the supposedly dubious connections of Mayor Zaragoza with the city<sup>112</sup>.

This process was described in the following way by the UCD respondent in Granada:

The original parties made their own selections. Then there were negotiations among those parties concerning those

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<sup>110</sup> Interview 54 (reproduced in Gunther, Sani, Shabad, Spain after Franco, Op.cit., p.102).

<sup>111</sup> Cambio 16, "Las listas del centro", 23-29 May 1977, p.24.

<sup>112</sup> "Las listas del centro", Cambio 16, 23-29 May 1977, p.24.

persons who would be most ideal for this province. (...) The centre only made one change. They added to our list one name of a representative of the Christian Democrats. For the most part these influences took the form of constant and informal negotiations with the centre<sup>113</sup>.

Not surprisingly, the respondent did not admit that any heavy-handedness had taken place, but it is interesting that a CD candidate (García-Romanillos Valverde of the PP, fourth on the list) was added by the centre - the objective of this addition would appear to be to compensate the CD parties for the loss of their position at the top of the list. Suárez had to offer the compensation of a lower place on the list to a member of CD, in order to maintain their participation, and Angulo Montes was later made Senator by royal designation; however, CD's bargaining power was insufficient to obtain a better position, and in the last resort, Suárez could always manage without the coalition in any particular province, a fact that increased his bargaining power in negotiations with the CD leaders. The reason for the unbalanced nature of the exchange is, once again, the organisational insignificance of the components of the coalition, as admitted by the Granada respondent:

We are however increasing in numbers. The increase is from zero in June of last year to 4 or 5000 at present. The parties which made up the UCD coalition at that time consisted of nothing more than persons at the national level. They had only a small circle of influence in specific areas. They could not by any stretch of the imagination be called national parties. Instead, there were simply personal contacts with national leaders. There was virtually no core of militants within the Party. That is a very recent development<sup>114</sup>.

As a result of this organisational vacuum, Suárez was able to impose a list in which two of the first three candidates (the first two were both advisors to Suárez) were Independents, free of any bond of loyalty to the barones: Mayor Zaragoza - an ex-Procurador and friend of the President, and Mercedes Moll de Miguel, a local businesswoman. The second-placed candidate, Arturo Moya Moreno of Fernández Ordóñez's PSD, had been in the Francoist SEU (the University Syndicate of the Movimiento), demonstrating the similarity of background between Independents and Social Democrats.

Segovia is one of the clearest cases of direct intervention from the Presidency. Four

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<sup>113</sup> Interview 30, June 1978.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

out of the five UCD parliamentarians from this province were Independents, and three of them had been Procuradores in the Francoist Cortes. In the Congress, Modesto Fraile Poujade had once been President of the Diputación Provincial, and Carlos Gila González of the PDC was a prominent surgeon who had been Vice-President of the Federación Empresarial Segoviana. In the Senate, Rafael Calvo Ortega was a University Professor and friend of Adolfo Suárez, Julio Nieves Borrego was the President of the Diputación Provincial and a Councillor of the Realm, and Luciano Sánchez Reus was Mayor of Segovia<sup>115</sup>. Therefore the UCD parliamentarians from Segovia represented the existing power structure of the province, which Suárez was able to recruit to support him in the elections. The local party leader interviewed by Richard Gunther in 1978 described the process of selection of candidates in the following way:

Adolfo Suárez had been civil governor of this province. Fernando Abril Martorell had been President of the Diputacion Provincial. In addition, he has very close family ties throughout this province. (...) Given these personal ties and the enormous prestige among the population of the province of prominent officials of the party it is obvious why we were the only party to gain a major victory. (...) Overall our candidates can be regarded as Independents who were tied to Suárez within the party. Personal ties were very important in the selection of our candidates. The prestige of the individual was also very important<sup>116</sup>.

To the question "did you formulate a list and then pass it on to Madrid for final approval?" the respondent answered "no, there was constant contact with persons in Madrid through friendships and through various ideological affinities". The CD parties are not mentioned in the interview, and it seems that they had no presence at all in this province. Instead, Suárez, through his "hombre de confianza" Rafael Calvo Ortega and using the contacts he had established in his period as Civil Governor of the province, was able to propose Fraile as head of the list. Most of the parliamentarians elected in Segovia had no prior loyalties to barones, and therefore would be less likely to act autonomously of the Presidency. The formation of the party in this province, therefore, corresponds to the ideal type of organisational penetration.

There were other examples of such presidential or governmental intervention,

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<sup>115</sup> Díaz Nosty, Radiografía..., Op.cit., pp.325-328.

<sup>116</sup> Interview 36, June 1978.

particularly in other provinces of Castile, the vast, largely rural central region of Spain. Cambio 16 reported that governmental intervention in Castile had not encountered significant obstacles: "las interferencias han sido escasas y se supone que los planes de Martín Villa han funcionado sin estridencias"<sup>117</sup>. This is perhaps an exaggeration, but a significant degree of government intervention can be observed by studying the characteristics of the deputies elected in some of the Castilian provinces. In Albacete, Ciudad Real, Guadalajara, Soria, Toledo and Zamora, the lists were mixed between Independents and CD parties, and in Palencia (controlled by PDC leader Alvarez de Miranda) and Valladolid CD parties gained all the seats. However the remaining Castilian provinces were dominated by the Independents. Two of Cuenca's three deputies and all three senators were Independents, and were all clearly linked to the Franco regime: four were azules who had participated in the Movimiento or the Syndical Organisation, and four had been Procuradores in the Francoist Cortes<sup>118</sup>. The Government's domination of the creation of the UCD in this rural province is undeniable. In Burgos and León all but one of the deputies elected for each province were Independents. León, the province of Interior Minister Martín Villa, is perhaps the most striking example of the use of the social and administrative structures of the previous regime for the establishment of the UCD. First in the list for the Congress was Manuel Núñez Pérez, an Independent who had held high office in the Franco administration; second was Emilio Martín Villa, the Minister's brother, Independent; third was Baudilio Tomé Robla, who was a member of the PDC, but was also a functionary of the Ministry of the Interior, thus establishing the link with Martín Villa; fourth was Manuel Angel Fernández Arias, an Independent with a long history of service to the Francoist Syndical Organisation and Deputy Mayor of Ponferrada, a small town in the province<sup>119</sup>. Independents headed the list in three more Castilian provinces, alongside candidates from the PP: Avila (Suárez's home province), Logroño and Salamanca.

This kind of direct government intervention can be detected in 22 provinces, just under half of the electoral districts. It is interesting to note that all the UCD deputies elected in Catalonia and the Basque Country were Independents, demonstrating the total absence of non-nationalist centrist groups in those regions. Because of the presence of three Independents in

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<sup>117</sup> "Las listas del centro", 23-29 May 1977, p.24.

<sup>118</sup> Díaz Nosty, Radiografía..., Op.cit., pp.169-173.

<sup>119</sup> Information available in Díaz Nosty, Radiografía..., Op.cit., pp.212-218.

the first three positions on the list, we also include Madrid in this category. The case of Madrid is not generalisable to the rest of the country, but it is interesting for what it reveals about the dynamic of the relations between the Presidency and Centro Democrático. The provincial party official interviewed by Richard Gunther explained the way in which the Madrid list was drawn up as follows:

The selection of candidates in this province had nothing to do with provincial criteria. Look at the party list and you will see that at the top are the chiefs of the various tendencies within the party. They represent all of those original parties which formed the coalition, except for those in the second and third positions. At the top of the list is Adolfo Suárez. He is followed by two of "the President's men". (...) In many instances personal ties and personal interests took precedence over general ideological matters. Lines of personal contact have a great deal to do with elites. Professional ties of various kinds are also important<sup>120</sup>.

Whilst the majority of those elected were leaders of CD parties (8 out of 12), the presence of Independents in the top three positions is noteworthy. It is particularly interesting to find an Independent with an impeccably Francoist past in third place, ahead of the CD barones: Juan Manuel Fanjul Sedeno, National Councillor of the Movimiento and Procurador, had been active in the Falange in the 1930s and had even taken part in the military coup which began the Civil War in 1936<sup>121</sup>. Moreover Oscar Alzaga, one of the PDC's most significant leaders, was demoted to 12th place in the list, and replaced by the PP's Pérez Llorca (later to become one of the President's closest collaborators). The PDC threatened to leave the coalition<sup>122</sup>, but were persuaded to remain. Alzaga was not elected, although a few months later Fanjul was conveniently named as Fiscal General del Reino, leaving his seat in the Congress to Alzaga. This is probably a good indicator of the advantageous position enjoyed by Suárez in the negotiations surrounding the electoral lists.

The consequences of direct governmental or presidential intervention in the creation of UCD in these particular provinces is that the national party leadership could control the emerging territorial structure. This favoured the centralisation of power within the party, as

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<sup>120</sup> Interview 33, June 1978.

<sup>121</sup> A feasible explanation for Fanjul's inclusion is his experience as an independent candidate for the Francoist Cortes in Madrid (in 1967), where he polled 340,000 votes.

<sup>122</sup> Fernando Alvarez de Miranda, Del "contubernio" al consenso, Op.cit., p.128.

its provincial structure would be dominated by individuals sympathetic to the views of the party leadership. The creation of a "pyramidal" structure established the precedent of central authority and leadership autonomy, which would later be formalised by the party statutes.

#### *4.2.2. Government intervention through a regional party*

In several cases government intervention in the drawing up of UCD electoral lists was exercised through a regional party with strong political links to the Government. The regional parties in the UCD coalition were not protest movements in favour of autonomy and recognition of national and cultural identity, as were the regional parties of Catalonia and the Basque Country, although to an extent they attempted to portray themselves as such. In reality they were small groupings around local personalities closely linked to the systems of social, political and economic power in their areas, and as such attached to the State structure. To the extent that many of the regionalists were associated with the President or the Ministry of the Interior through their past involvement in the Movimiento or in the State administration, their loyalty to Suárez or to Martín Villa was comparable to that of the Independents. However the creation of parties as bases for negotiation, and their control of the relations of power in their areas (in some cases through clientelar domination, known as *caciquismo*) allowed them more autonomy from the Government, especially since they often possessed incomparable resources for electoral mobilisation. The most extreme case of this was Galicia, well known for the weight of clientelar structures, particularly in rural areas<sup>123</sup>; one journalist reported that in Galicia "no existe una verdadera coalición centrista, sino que las provincias se han convertido en pequeños señoríos feudales apadrinados por partidos de ámbito local"<sup>124</sup>.

In the province of La Coruña, four out of the five elected deputies belonged to the Partido Gallego Independiente, led by José Luis Meilán Gil, regarded as the key *cacique* of the area. Meilán, a University Professor in Law, had held important government posts such as Technical General Secretary of the Presidency and Technical General Secretary of the

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<sup>123</sup> See Julio Sequeiros Tizón, *El talante del Sr. Breogán*, Coruña, Edicións Nós, 1990; Fernando Prieto Valdés, "La formación de la UCD en Galicia: el papel de los dirigentes provinciales", paper presented at the I Congress of Contemporary History of Spain, Salamanca, 7-9 April 1992.

<sup>124</sup> *Cambio 16*, 23-9 May 1977, "Las listas del centro", p.24.



Ministry of Public Works. He had also been Procurador, was a prominent member of the Opus Dei<sup>125</sup>, and possessed two Honours (Gran Cruz de la Orden del Mérito Civil and de la Orden Civil de Alfonso X el Sabio) from the Franco regime<sup>126</sup>, a good indicator of the extent to which he was tied to the dictatorship. Cambio 16 described him as "one of Suárez's men"<sup>127</sup>. The other elected candidates were members of his party the PGI, except Vázquez Guillén, third on the list, who was in the PSD of Fernández Ordóñez, but linked to Meilán through the Opus Dei. This can be regarded as a case of government intervention, since in effect the regional party dominating the list was simply the support group of a local personality who was politically close to Suárez.

The case of Acción Regional Extremeña (AREX) in Badajoz and Cáceres is similar. AREX was founded by Enrique Sánchez de León, the archetypal azul: he had been Head of the SEU as a student in Barcelona, Technical General Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Director General of Interior Policy under Martín Villa, a National Councillor of the Movimiento and a Procurador in the Cortes for Badajoz in the last Franco legislature. Four of the eight elected deputies on the UCD lists in Extremadura were members of AREX. In Badajoz, the elected deputies were Sánchez de León, Antonio Masa Godoy, not in AREX but linked to the Franco regime and once a leader of Alfonso Osorio's UDE, Manuel Jesús García Garrido, once Procurador in the Cortes and a member of AREX, and finally Dolores Morenas Aydillo of the Partido Popular. In Cáceres Juan Rovira Tarazona and Felipe Romero Morcillo were members of AREX linked to the Administration and the Syndical Organisation respectively, whilst the two CD representatives, Manuel Bermejo Hernández (Liberal) and Santiago Parras Iglesias were also linked to the regime administration<sup>128</sup>. Whilst there is no denying that these individuals had sufficient weight in their areas for them to possess significant political resources independently of the Government (particularly in terms of mobilisation of a passive rural vote), the close links of the regional leaders with the central administration, and particularly with Rodolfo Martín Villa, permit us to describe the creation

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<sup>125</sup> Suárez had been close to the Opus Dei, although it is not clear whether or not he was a member. See Morán, Historia de una ambición, Op.cit.

<sup>126</sup> Díaz Nosty, Radiografía..., Op.cit., p.162.

<sup>127</sup> "Las listas del centro", p.24.

<sup>128</sup> Díaz Nosty, Radiografía, Op.cit., pp.94-97, pp.131-133.

of UCD in this region as government intervention through the regional party.

In Andalusia, the creation of UCD was also conditioned by a regionalist party, the Partido Social Liberal Andaluz (PSLA). This party, founded by the Rector of the University of Sevilla Manuel Clavero Arévalo<sup>129</sup>, joined the coalition at the last moment at the invitation of Suárez, along with the other regional parties analysed above. Some of the PSLA deputies elected had participated in the Syndical Organisation, and Clavero, an ex-Procurador, was closer to the Franco regime than to the democratic opposition. However the PSLA differed from the other UCD regionalist parties in that it did appear to have genuine pretensions for Andaluz regional autonomy. The PSLA had an important presence in three provinces. In Córdoba, three out of four parliamentarians elected on the UCD list were members of the PSLA, and in Cádiz, two members of the PSLA were elected to Parliament. In Sevilla, the situation was less clear, since other CD parties had an important political presence in the province (this case is discussed below as an example of negotiated intervention). However, the first two positions on the Seville list were occupied by PSLA candidates. The arrival of the PSLA in the coalition is a further example of presidential intervention (it was Suárez who brought Clavero into the coalition, proposing him as head of the list).

The formal autonomy of these regionalist parties would seem to correspond to Panebianco's concept of diffusion. However, this autonomy was in most cases more apparent than real, as local leaders were mostly Movimiento or State bureaucrats familiar with centralised hierarchical structures. Moreover they tended to identify with the interests of the State apparatus represented by the President and particularly his Minister of the Interior Martín Villa. For these reasons it is appropriate to regard this type of organisational expansion as a variant of government intervention, implying a strengthening of Suárez's domination of the emerging territorial base of the party. However, as will be seen later, this was conditioned by the difficulties involved in the process of regional devolution.

#### *4.2.3. Negotiated intervention*

Negotiated intervention implies that the party list was dominated by neither

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<sup>129</sup> For the foundation of the party see his book España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Barcelona, Planeta, 1983.

Independents nor Centre Democrats, though the Number One in the list was not an Independent. This group contains 6 provinces; we have interview data for two of them: Toledo and Sevilla. In Toledo the UCD list elected two deputies: the social democrat Rafael Arias Salgado, and the independent Gonzalo Payo Subiza. The mixed nature of the process of candidate selection was described by a local party official:

Each of the original parties of the UCD coalition initially proposed about two or three candidates. The original members of the UCD coalition in this province included the Izquierda Democrática, the Christian Democrats, the Partido Popular, and the PDP. They set forth a series of names which were then placed on a list. Unfortunately, not many of those persons were very well known in this province. They were of more or less middle visibility and prestige. Therefore, Gonzalo Payo was approached and placed on the party list as an Independent. Up until a few hours before closure of nominations in Madrid Gonzalo Payo was listed as number 1 in the province for the UCD, but at that moment the Central Office of the UCD suggested to the provincial committee that Rafael Arias Salgado was a somewhat better prepared candidate and that he should be added to the list<sup>130</sup>.

This account of the process of drawing up lists shows that the formation of UCD was very much a mixture of elements of penetration and elements of diffusion. From the geographical or spatial point of view, at all times the initiative came from the centre; as the Toledo respondent states: "both the addition of Payo and Arias Salgado to the list were decisions that were made in Madrid"<sup>131</sup>. However the intervention of the taxi-parties meant that Suárez was not totally free to select candidates as he saw fit, so this province can be regarded as an example of negotiated intervention. In the long run the Toledo UCD was dominated by the President, as Arias Salgado, a Social Democrat, was later to become a close collaborator of Suárez.

In the case of Sevilla the selection of UCD candidates was the result of a negotiation between the CD groups and a regionalist party. The presence of the PSLA meant there was some element of intervention from the governmental centre, but the practical process of candidate selection appeared to follow a pattern of diffusion:

In this province, instead of a merger of thirteen parties, there were only three of the original parties in existence (the PDC, the PD and the PSLA). Those three parties began collaborating on the eve of the election. (The selection of

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<sup>130</sup> Interview 41, June 1978.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

candidates) was done separately by the three parties which merged to form the UCD in this province. When those parties formed a coalition they held negotiations among themselves to agree upon a common list of candidates. Then that list was placed before the coalition at national level for its approval. There were no differences between the list that we submitted and the final list. There may have been a small readjustment of the order of names on the list, but there were no differences of opinion. (...) With regard to political involvement during the previous regime, there were some individuals who played prominent social roles but none who were active in pure politics as such<sup>132</sup>.

With the important exception of Clavero, the UCD deputies had not participated in the Franco regime: García Añoveros of the PSLA was an academic, Tassara Lloset of the PDC was a businessman, Soledad Becerril of the FPDL was a journalist and Eugenio Ales Pérez, also of the FPDL, was a labour lawyer<sup>133</sup>. The absence of Independents or azules in this province is notable, but government intervention was evident in that Clavero's Number One place on the list was proposed by Adolfo Suárez (see Table 2.1.).

Examples of other provinces in which this negotiated intervention appears to have taken place in view of the characteristics of the deputies elected are Guadalajara and Zamora<sup>134</sup>. In Guadalajara, the head of the list was Luis de Grandes Pascual, a Christian Democrat close to Alfonso Osorio, and the other elected deputy - Leandro Cros Palencia - was an azul who had served in the Banking sector of the Syndical Organisation. In Zamora, the list was headed by José Antonio Otero Madrigal, a well-travelled academic who had worked in the United Nations and was a founder of the PP, and second in the list was Modesto Alonso Pelayo, an Independent businessman who had represented local agrarian interests in the Syndical Organisation. In Castellón, Ciudad Real, Guadalajara, Sevilla, Soria, Toledo and Zamora the CD parties were not particularly strong, but had sufficient presence to block government domination.

#### 4.2.4. *Coalitional domination*

The provinces in this category are cases in which the Government did not impose its own candidates, although they do not necessarily correspond to the requisites suggested by

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<sup>132</sup> Interview 16, June 1978.

<sup>133</sup> Díaz Nosty, Radiografía, Op.cit., pp.329-333.

<sup>134</sup> All data from Díaz Nosty, Radiografía..., Op.cit.

Panebianco for the type of organisational diffusion. In some cases they are provinces in which the Madrid leadership of the original CD parties was able to dominate the elaboration of the electoral lists, although in others autonomous political groups did emerge spontaneously before the creation of the UCD coalition. The provinces in this category for which there is interview data are Málaga and Valencia.

The case of Málaga is interesting in that it is one of the “““““few provinces in which a degree of real diffusion (in the sense that the lists were not imposed from Madrid) took place. Here the Social Democrats were dominant, as is shown by their placing of two candidates in the top three positions in the list. The UCD official interviewed in Málaga explained why:

This province is dominated by the progressive, Social Democratic wing of the party. That is the result of an agreement between Social Democrats and Clavero's party in April of 1977. That agreement in effect divided Andalusia into a western zone which fell into Clavero's jurisdiction and an eastern zone which was to be more Social Democratic<sup>135</sup>.

Other CD parties also participated in the formation of the coalition through their contacts in the province, emphasising that diffusion - in the sense of spontaneous emergence of party sub-groups - did not really occur:

All the national leaders had their peones (pawns) in the provinces. There were friends of Fernández Ordóñez and the rest who organised parties at this local level. At the time of the June elections this party consisted of little more than a group of friends. They were little more than personal contacts totally lacking any organisational means<sup>136</sup>.

The Government's failure to impose its will on the coalition in this province is demonstrated by the process of elaboration of the electoral list, dominated by the Social Democrats:

There was a joint meeting of the executives of each of the four parties. They then chose persons to place on the list. Those candidates were both members of the original four parties and were Independents separate from those four parties. In total, from our party list four were Independents originally. (...) It was not necessary for the Central Committee of the party to intervene in this province. In some other provinces yes, but here they did not influence

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<sup>135</sup> Interview 23, June 1978.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

our list at all<sup>137</sup>.

Three of the four Independents had low places on the list and failed to be elected, whilst the Independent elected was associated with the Social Democrat party of Fernández Ordóñez. The other deputies were Social Democrat Torre Prados and Huellín Vallejo of the PSLA. Málaga is therefore one of the best examples of coalitional domination in the creation of UCD.

The Partido Popular managed to dominate the UCD lists in two provinces: Orense and Valencia. Orense was an example of the foundation of UCD on the basis of a pure caciquil structure in cooperation with an important CD leader, Pío Cabanillas. Cabanillas mobilised local cacique Eulogio Gómez Franqueira who joined the PP bringing several followers with him, and the PP won four out of the five seats available. This corresponds to the type of coalitional domination both because it increased the weight within UCD of a CD baron, Cabanillas, and also because the local leader involved had total autonomy from the centre, dominating the exchange of political resources in the province (as was demonstrated after the collapse of UCD)<sup>138</sup>. In practice, however, the closeness of Cabanillas to the State apparatus and the Suárez Government meant that this province remained fundamentally loyal to the UCD party leadership.

Valencia is one of the few examples of genuine diffusion in the creation of UCD. It was the only province - apart from Madrid - in which the PP developed an organisational structure totally independently of the Government, providing it with a degree of autonomy. Led by magistrate Emilio Attard, the PP was able to place three candidates in the five winning positions in the UCD list, largely because he had begun building up a base of support in his province as early as 1975<sup>139</sup>. However the other two went to Liberals associated with Joaquín Garrigues, indicating some degree of interference from Madrid even here. The creation of UCD in Valencia for the 1977 elections has been described as follows:

The UCD was formed at national level out of coalition of Christian Democrats, Liberals, Social Democrats and the

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> See Fernando Jáuregui, La derecha después de Fraga, Madrid, Ediciones El País, 1989, Chap.5.

<sup>139</sup> For his account of the establishment of UCD in Valencia, see Emilio Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit.

Partido Popular. When this development occurred at the national level, the leaders of the party in Valencia got together and coalesced forming a provincial list for the party. There were representatives of all four of these parties in this province. (...) These persons all had contacts at the national level. Prior to the creation of these parties, they had personal contacts with, for example, Garrigues. (...) (The drawing up of the provincial list) involved conversations between leaders at the national level and the local level. Individual names were proposed by each of the four component parties. Then there were negotiations over which individual should be placed on the list in which order. The list was adjusted a bit in Madrid<sup>140</sup>.

There were no Independents among the elected UCD deputies in Valencia, demonstrating the President's inability to infiltrate the UCD list in that province. The contacts with Madrid were dominated by the CD, in particular by the PP leaders and the Liberal Garrigues. Therefore the Valencian deputies had some degree of organisational autonomy with respect to the Government, reducing Suárez's control over the parliamentary group and mitigating the centralised control of the emerging party organisation.

#### *4.2.5. Patterns of territorial expansion*

The above analysis of the way in which the electoral lists were drawn up in different parts of the country (summarised in Table 2.2.) reveals considerable heterogeneity in the nature of the creation of UCD in the 51 Spanish provinces in which it presented candidates. In 12 provinces (Alava, Barcelona, Bilbao, Ceuta, Gerona, Huelva, Jaén, Lérida, Lugo, Pontevedra, Segovia and Tarragona), all the UCD deputies and senators elected were Independents, revealing that the Government had been able to control the lists without any interference from the coalition parties. In 3 more (León, Burgos, Cuenca), all but one of the deputies were Independents. In 7 provinces (Avila, Granada, Logroño, Madrid, Salamanca, Santander and Zaragoza), although there was no clear situation of numerical dominance, an Independent headed the list. Moreover in 5 other provinces (Badajoz, Cáceres, Cádiz, Córdoba and La Coruña) the elected deputies were for the most part members of regional parties such as AREX, the PGI or the PSLA, which had close links to the President.

Therefore in these 27 provinces, a high degree of presidential or governmental intervention can be detected. On the other hand, in 15 provinces (Alicante, Almería, Huesca,

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<sup>140</sup> Interview 61, July 1978.

Málaga, Melilla, Murcia, Navarra, Orense, Oviedo, Palencia, Palma de Mallorca, Tenerife, Teruel, Valladolid and Valencia) the deputies elected were all members of the coalition parties, and in Albacete and Gran Canaria only two Independent deputies were elected. The limited nature of the Government's intervention in the creation of UCD in these areas indicates that the CD parties had managed to establish some rudimentary organisational structures there. In the remaining 7 provinces the situation was more evenly balanced, and candidate selection appears to have been the result of a less unequal exchange of resources between the President and the coalition barones.

The President and his Government colleagues were therefore able to directly control candidate selection in just over half the electoral districts. In the rest of the country Suárez and Martín Villa had to negotiate the lists with the CD parties, and in many provinces the CD parties held the dominant position in the exchange of political resources. Although the precise definition of diffusion proposed by Panebianco proves difficult to apply to the case of UCD's genetic model, the adaptation of diffusion (coalitional domination) to take into account organisational fragmentation at national level does provide clues as to the consequences for the organisational development of UCD. In almost a third of Spanish provinces the coalitional parties enjoyed the dominant presence among UCD parliamentarians.

## **5. Conclusion**

The process by which the UCD emerged to win the first general elections of Spain's new democracy can be fruitfully analysed in terms of the concepts proposed in Chapter 1. The party's genetic model was conditioned by the fact that the driving force behind the creation of UCD was a coherent nucleus within the Spanish Government, dominated by the leadership of President Adolfo Suárez. The evolution of this leadership was fundamental to the development of the party organisation.

The strength of Suárez's leadership meant that the UCD genetic model showed a high level of autonomy - it appears that UCD was largely free from dependence on any external sponsor organisation for the supply of key organisational resources. The Government and its President, rather than any outside organisation, controlled the key resources for electoral mobilisation: the popularity of Adolfo Suárez, the network of provincial contacts controlled by Suárez and Martín Villa, and Government control over State television. UCD was not tied



to any narrow interests which could demand political help in exchange for generating electoral support. Apart from the financial help the party received from some banks (which apparently was not attached to any specific conditions<sup>141</sup>), the UCD's potential for organisational autonomy was very high.

The dominance of the party leadership at this early stage conditioned the nature of the organisational structures adopted by the new party. The territorial implantation of the UCD - the "grass-roots" arena of party creation - corresponds more to a process of penetration than to one of diffusion. The electoral lists for nearly all constituencies were drawn up in the presidential offices, and the essential resources for electoral mobilisation controlled by the Government. Taking a "vertical" perspective, the peripheral party structures, such that existed, were in a clear dependency relationship with regard to the centre, thus creating the conditions for a formalisation of leadership autonomy as the party developed a set of organisational rules. The extent of governmental penetration at the party's origins can therefore be seen as setting limits to the exercise of "voice" and the practice of interfactional bargaining within UCD.

This implied dangers for the party's development. Although the dominant position of Suárez and his circle cannot be questioned, the UCD genetic model was strongly conditioned by elements of organisational "diffusion": it was essentially an alliance between the governmental nucleus, and a fragmented coalition of formally autonomous taxi-parties. This can be seen in the creation of the parliamentary arena of organisational activity. The UCD parliamentary group in the Congress contained numerous representatives of the CD parties, alongside Independents and Regionalists. The heterogeneous composition of the group reflected these elements of diffusion, rather than the dominance of the leadership, suggesting that interfactional bargaining was inevitable if parliamentary cohesion was to be maintained:

Lo que se hace es yuxtaponer unos grupos de personas con sus propios canales de confianza, con sus propios canales de convivencia, en una organización superior (...). Eso es una yuxtaposición. Ahí no hay un partido sino que hay un conjunto de grupos, unidos por el triunfo electoral y la buena imagen que en ese momento tiene Suárez, pero nada más<sup>142</sup>.

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<sup>141</sup> Interviews with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992, and Iñigo Caverio, July 1992.

<sup>142</sup> Interview C36.

The initial pressures on the CD parties to cooperate with the Government stemmed from their dependency on it for electoral resources, and their approval of the Suárez reform agenda. The degree of improvisation with which the coalition was constituted indicates that the sources of inter-group cooperation were themselves largely short-term considerations. After the elections, the internal coherence of the UCD parliamentary elite would require a more stable base if this initial diffusion were to be overcome. The relationship between this parliamentary group and the party leadership is fundamental in explaining the collapse of UCD. However this relationship must be examined in the context of the organisational development of the extra-parliamentary party. In the words of one UCD leader, "la génesis de UCD es: un Gobierno que selecciona unas personas que forman un grupo parlamentario, y que finalmente organizan un partido"<sup>143</sup>. This Chapter has examined the first part of this process; the dynamics of this parliamentary group (Chapter 3) and the subsequent development of a party organisation with formal rules for decision-making (Chapter 4) must be examined if the causes of its spectacular collapse are to be identified.

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

## **CHAPTER 3: UCD IN GOVERNMENT: CONSENSUS AND THE CONSTITUTION**

### **1. Introduction**

The UCD in June 1977 was an electoral coalition of several juridically recognised political formations. The disintegration of such a coalition would seem to require little explanation. However by October 1978 the coalition had been transformed into a unitary party, with the support, or at least the acquiescence, of all the component groups. This suggests that party creation itself must be explained, in order to understand the true nature of the party's collapse. This Chapter aims to identify the sources of sub-group interdependency in 1977-79 which enabled Adolfo Suárez to consolidate his dominant position in UCD by transforming the original coalition into a unified and highly centralised party, whose decision-making structures concentrated power around the party leader. This was achieved despite the significant parliamentary presence, and competing political projects, of the original CD parties. It will be argued that the presidentialist approach to party management adopted in this period cannot be explained merely in terms of the centralisation of electoral resources around the party leader. Instead the relative stability enjoyed by the organisation in this period, and Suárez's dominant leadership position, must be analysed in relation to the political output of the UCD Government.

### **2. Party competition and the search for a social base: The electoral arena**

UCD's 1977 electoral victory was a qualified victory (see Table 3.1). With 34 % of the vote, UCD was the most voted list, and the distortions of the electoral system gave it 165 seats, only 11 short of an absolute majority. This meant that the UCD Government, although it could govern alone, would need to seek parliamentary support from other political forces. In the constituent period, this was not a problem; indeed Suárez was determined that the new Constitution should enjoy the support of the vast majority of political groups represented in Parliament.

Since much emphasis has been placed on the importance of resources for electoral mobilisation, it is worth briefly examining the nature of UCD's electoral support and the way in which the characteristics of the party's social base affected its organisational development.

The emerging electoral arena in the Spain of the 1970s was characterised by "una falta de correspondencia exacta entre posición de clase y conducta política"<sup>1</sup>. This implied that voting behaviour would be unpredictable, even volatile, an interpretation supported by research demonstrating that in the transition period the Spanish electorate had a very low level of party identification<sup>2</sup>. The long period without party activity meant that party loyalties of the kind described the "Michigan" studies<sup>3</sup> were more or less non-existent. The emergence of a proliferation of new political parties, as mentioned in the previous chapter, further complicated the electoral arena, increasing uncertainty. The 1977 results reduced the number of parties, but fragmentation was not immediately replaced by stable patterns of party support, and in the first years of the democratic system, party preferences were highly unstable. In 1978, 46% of the sample expressed a preference for a political party, and 37% in 1980, but only 16% of the sample expressed a preference for the same party at both points<sup>4</sup>. Studies by Barnes, McDonough and López Piña show that in 1978 and 1980 a majority of Spanish voters did not feel close to any party, and that the two biggest parties - particularly the UCD - had a much smaller number of identifiers than voters. A very small number of voters "felt close to" UCD in 1978-80 - under a third of those who actually voted for the party. The electoral arena in Spain in the period 1977-82 was characterised by a high level of fluidity, leading to instability in parties' external commitments, and the supply of a key resource for a political party in a competitive democracy: electoral support.

However, electoral fluidity was tempered by the fact that although most voters did not identify with any particular party, they did have relatively stable ideological tendencies, and opinions about political leaders<sup>5</sup>. The most important of these tendencies was the fundamental

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<sup>1</sup> Juan Linz, "La sociedad española: presente, pasado y futuro", in Juan Linz, (ed.), España: un presente para el futuro. Vol.I: La Sociedad, Madrid, Instituto de Estudios Económicos, 1984, p.82. This was confirmed by electoral behaviour in the transition period. One poll showed that all major parties received support from across the social spectrum ("Ningún partido monopoliza una clase social", El País, 28 May 1977, p.13).

<sup>2</sup> Samuel H.Barnes, Peter McDonough, Antonio López Piña, "The development of partisanship in new democracies: The case of Spain", in the American Journal of Political Science, 29, 1985, pp.695-720. See also Barnes, McDonough, López Piña, "The Spanish public in political transition", British Journal of Political Science, 11, 1981, pp.49-79.

<sup>3</sup> See Philip Converse, "Of time and partisan stability", *Op.cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Barnes, McDonough, López Piña, "The development of partisanship in new democracies", *Op.cit.*, p.701. By comparison in Britain, the model of a stable democracy, 81% expressed a party preference, and in Italy 73%.

<sup>5</sup> Barnes, McDonough, López Piña, "The development of partisanship in new democracies", *Op.cit.*, p.696.

moderation of the Spanish electorate. This is revealed by the fact that most Spanish voters placed themselves in the central points in the ideological scale, and the electoral success of UCD suggested that voters acted coherently with their expressed ideological preferences. This can be seen in Table 3.2.: 57 % of UCD voters placed themselves at points 5 or 6 of the scale, and the mean position of UCD voters was 5.6, very close to the central position in the ideological scale, compared with 3.6 amongst PSOE voters and 7.3 amongst AP voters. The clustering of voters around the ideological centre position meant that extremist or authoritarian options had little chance of success, and that party competition, if it responded to the opportunities and constraints of the electoral arena, would be centripetal. This implies that the emerging political parties, if they were to act as vote maximisers (in the sense of seeking to maximise their electoral support), would be pushed towards catch-all types of electoral strategy. In the case of UCD, this meant avoiding being perceived as a party of the traditional right, and competing with its main opponent, the PSOE, for the diffuse, non-identifying electorate of the centre.

This presented the party with a dilemma. Although a logic of constituency representation, favouring a conservative social base, could be an effective strategy for organisational consolidation, UCD's initial purpose was very much tied to the need to govern. This implied that the party needed to follow a vote-maximising strategy in order to achieve government power, an objective which could enter into conflict with a strategy of consolidation of the social base. As Maravall has argued:

En el caso de España, la distribución (del electorado) era claramente asimétrica a favor del centro-izquierda/izquierda. Ello significaba que (...) UCD no podría permitir que su imagen se desplazara hacia la derecha, mientras que el mismo tiempo tendría que procurar representar a los sectores de la derecha<sup>6</sup>.

According to Maravall's data, the political space which UCD could aspire to occupy was clear: 40 % of voters placed themselves in the centre of the ideological scale (although it should be remembered that a proportion of these voters lived in areas where nationalist parties competed with UCD for the centre space). This made it difficult for UCD to achieve sufficient electoral support to govern, at the same time as defending the interests of a conservative constituency. The PSOE also competed with UCD for a sector of the undefined

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<sup>6</sup> José María Maravall, La política de la transición, Op.cit., p.36.

centre vote<sup>7</sup>, a situation which encouraged UCD to emphasise progressive rather than conservative values.

To complicate further the strategic dilemma facing UCD, there is evidence that the ideological moderation of some sectors of the Spanish electorate was in fact the result of a passive approach to political questions, in which a central ideological positioning was a "non-choice", rather than an active choice in favour of moderate, centrist ideological positions. This sector has been described as follows:

Almost half of the "none-identifier" category placed themselves at points 5 or 6. This is the marais, the "swamp". It is a group crucial to the electoral success of the UCD in the early elections and of the PSOE in 1982. Respondents in the marais not only avoid extremes; they fail to identify with any party<sup>8</sup>.

Amongst these electors, variables such as leadership attractiveness were important<sup>9</sup>. UCD's success in capturing the marais vote owed much to the popularity of Suárez: he was the most popular leader amongst voters in the ideological space 5-8. An El País survey, carried out during the 1977 electoral campaign, put Suárez top of the popularity ranking with 68%, followed by González with 42%<sup>10</sup>. A second poll revealed that out of the 30.1% who had not yet decided their vote, 10.3% described themselves as "Centrists", with the second highest group, defining themselves as "Socialists", consisting of only 3.3% of the electorate<sup>11</sup>. There seems little doubt that most of this sector voted UCD in 1977. The support of the moderate centre electorate - the marais - was a key element in UCD's electoral victory, and the popularity of Adolfo Suárez amongst this sector is important in explaining this support.

This interpretation of the Spanish electoral arena would lead to the conclusion that a rational short-term vote-seeking strategy for UCD would be to emphasise its moderation, even

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<sup>7</sup> Juan Linz et al, IV Informe FOESSA, Vol.I, Op.cit., p.220.

<sup>8</sup> Barnes, McDonough and López Piña, "The development of partisanship in new democracies", Op.cit., pp.705-6.

<sup>9</sup> For an examination of the electoral importance of leadership in Spain in the transition period and beyond, see Manuel Justel, "El líder como factor de decisión y explicación del voto", Working Paper núm. 51, Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials, Barcelona, 1992.

<sup>10</sup> Amongst Suárez's rivals on the Spanish right, Areilza's rating was 28% and Joaquín Ruiz-Giménez's 23% (El País, 11 May 1977, p.12). Significantly, no other UCD leader was sufficiently well-known to merit a rating.

<sup>11</sup> "La tercera parte de los indecisos se declaran centristas", El País, 26 May 1977.

to the point of embracing progressive values, exploiting the electoral attractiveness of Adolfo Suárez in order to sway the less ideologically sophisticated sectors of the electoral centre. To the extent that it was difficult to follow a logic of constituency representation without losing power, this made sense. To use Hirschman's terms, the exit options of centre voters, who could vote for the PSOE as well as UCD, were greater than those of right-wing voters, who would risk wasting their vote if they supported AP<sup>12</sup>. This can explain much of Suárez's emphasis on progressive values and consensus (to be discussed later). However the constraints on such a strategy - the possible electoral costs of competition with the PSOE for the centre ground - must be discussed. First of all, the dependency on a popular leadership figure, and the emphasis on the relatively short-term problems of the transition period, meant that electoral mobilisation was achieved on the basis of transitory and fragile commitments. Moreover, the analysis of UCD's strategic choices must also take into account the peculiar characteristics of the UCD electorate.

It has been argued that direct competition between UCD and the PSOE on the basis of centre-oriented ideological positioning was hindered by the basic differences between the electorates of these two parties<sup>13</sup>. In terms of ideological positioning, the space 5-6 - that represented by UCD - had quite different characteristics to the space 3-4 - the socialist space. These differences set the limits to the catch-all strategy suggested by Spain's centre-oriented electorate, since too great an effort to compete with the PSOE would run the risk of alienating the more conservative elements of party support. The FOESSA research has demonstrated that the UCD electorate had a number of distinguishing features which made it unlikely to tolerate the kind of policy positions which could attract the more progressive part of the centre vote. In general, this research indicates that the electors most likely to vote UCD were those whose basic ideological and political attitudes led them to position themselves on the right of the ideological scale<sup>14</sup>. Even though right-wing voters had less feasible exit options than centre voters, they could still withdraw their vote if UCD failed to distribute some collective benefits to them. Therefore, in order to preserve this support, UCD would have to avoid straying too far towards the centre-left of the political spectrum.

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<sup>12</sup> Because of the majoritarian tendencies of the d'Hondt electoral system.

<sup>13</sup> Informe FOESSA, Op.cit., p.196.

<sup>14</sup> Informe FOESSA, Op.cit., p.218.

An example of this dilemma is the party's approach to the religious cleavage. Although Spain was becoming a more secularised society<sup>15</sup>, Catholicism was the principal distinguishing feature of the UCD electorate. Data presented by José Ignacio Wert shows that 83.5% of UCD voters were practising Catholics, as opposed to 68.4% of the electorate in general<sup>16</sup>. The PSOE's electorate was predominantly non-practising. This meant that these two parties were positioned on opposite sides of a cleavage which has dominated recent Spanish history, and remained important in the 1970s. The position 5-6 was also characterised by the "non-rejection" of the figures of Franco (and the dictatorship) and Suárez, whilst the position 3-4 - the political space of the PSOE - revealed a strong rejection of Franco<sup>17</sup>. UCD voters were also more likely to be women, old, self-employed or housewives, and to live in traditional areas dominated by agricultural production<sup>18</sup>. These variables, and particularly the religiousness factor, mark an important difference between the electorates of the PSOE and UCD. According to the data published in the FOESSA report, the centre or centre-right political space (points 5-6 on the ideological scale), had quite different characteristics from those detected in the centre-left space (points 3-4).

This data suggests that many UCD voters were basically conservative, but also largely unpoliticised. The UCD electorate was the least ideologically defined<sup>19</sup>; unlike the electorates of the PSOE and the PCE, UCD voters did not seem to identify actively with anything, except perhaps the Catholic religion, and to an extent the figure of Suárez. This indicates that UCD attracted voters from a very broad political space, whose level of ideological definition was low, and whose choice of vote seemed to be more passive - non-rejection of Franco and Suárez - rather than active. This assessment is further supported by the analysis of the geographical spread of the UCD vote. Although the UCD won fairly even support all round the country (except in the Basque Country and Catalonia), it was particularly strong in the rural, agricultural provinces of Castile, Galicia, and the islands; according to Caciagli "triunfó

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<sup>15</sup> See Juan Linz, "Religión y política", in Linz and Montero (eds), Crisis y cambio, Op.cit.

<sup>16</sup> José Ignacio Wert, "El electorado de UCD: Una versión sociológica", paper presented at the Congress of the Asociación Española de Ciencia Política, Zaragoza, March 1983, p.7.

<sup>17</sup> Informe FOESSA, Op.cit., p.220.

<sup>18</sup> Informe FOESSA, Op.cit., p.218.

<sup>19</sup> Wert, "El electorado de UCD", Op.cit., p.8.



en las zonas que siempre habían votado al partido del poder"<sup>20</sup>. This suggests that the many UCD voters may have been expressing an instinctive support for the existing Government as much as a positive choice in favour of a political formation. The level of commitment of this electorate to the party, as distinct from the Government, was probably very low.

The FOESSA research does not suggest that UCD and the PSOE were not in electoral competition: an undefined centre vote was open to both parties: "se aprecia la existencia de un espacio político que se comparte por ambos partidos y que es el resultado del entrecruzamiento de variables ideológicas"<sup>21</sup>. The electoral success of UCD was a function of the degree to which the party's electoral strategy could attract undefined centre voters without alienating the more conservative elements of its electorate. In 1977, this dilemma was resolved in two ways. First of all, the popularity of Suárez, a popularity which extended beyond the confines of UCD's electoral support, facilitated the personalisation of the election campaign, which distracted attention from ideological distinctions. Second, the UCD programme was focused on the continuation of the reform project, the content of which was acceptable to broad sectors of the electorate, again dimming ideological controversy. However, electoral mobilisation on such undivisive themes was possible only in the exceptional circumstances of the transition period; future campaigns would require a more distinctive message. Moreover, for such an ideologically heterogeneous organisation, the inevitable strategic choices would have marked consequences for the distribution of incentives, and therefore the continued participation of the different sub-groups. The ideological and strategic preferences of these sub-groups are examined below.

### **3. The UCD parliamentary elite: The sources of interdependency**

#### **3.1. An explanation for cooperation**

The composition of the Centrist parliamentary groups in the new Cortes reflected the mixed organisational development described in Chapter 2 (see Table 3.3.). This shows that on the horizontal or factional dimension, the UCD parliamentary elite was a fragmented body, divided into sub-groups representing the original taxi-parties. In spite of this, a relatively high

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<sup>20</sup> Mario Caciagli, Elecciones y partidos en la transición española, Op.cit., p.59.

<sup>21</sup> Informe FOESSA, Op.cit., p.222.

level of internal coherence was achieved in the 1977-79 period, as UCD parliamentarians provided disciplined support to the first two UCD Governments. The analysis presented below aims to show that the sources of this coherence - the ready availability of uncontroversial policy payoffs for all party sub-groups - were tied to the exceptional circumstances of the constituent process.

The UCD leadership's centralised control over key resources created a situation of electoral dependency of participating groups on Suárez's Government, as the previous Chapter has demonstrated. But once parliamentary representation had been achieved, continued cooperation between the component groups of the UCD coalition required different foundations. In line with the purposive model of political participation advocated earlier, this cooperation is seen as the function of the strategic choices made by the sub-groups for the achievement of their political objectives. This is not to deny that in some cases cooperation may have involved some distribution of selective incentives, both instead of or as well as collective incentives. However the principal source of cooperation was the distribution of collective incentives, consisting in the Government's pursuit of the short-term political objective of a democratic Constitution, an objective shared by all the sub-groups. There was also a high degree of convergence between the sub-groups and the Suárez Government on much of the content of this Constitution. There was however potential for disagreement on more specific policy issues. This can be shown by establishing and comparing the "hierarchy of objectives"<sup>22</sup> held by each group.

### 3.2. Formal objectives: the ideological positions

That a coalition on the basis of the common objective of providing a democratic Constitution was possible between the component groups of UCD is demonstrated by policy and ideological documents published by the coalitional parties. These documents reveal that, as far as the nature of the political system is concerned, the differences were minimal:

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<sup>22</sup> Roberto Garvía Soto, "El problema de los objetivos en las organizaciones formales", Estudios del Instituto Juan March, 43, Madrid, 1993, p.8. This analysis sees ideological documents and sociological data as indicative of the political objectives and interests defended by elite politicians, and helpful in interpreting political behaviour. However I do not argue that political behaviour can be deduced from this information. This analysis therefore aims to avoid the deterministic approach described by Panebianco as the "teleological and sociological prejudices" (Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.3-4).

ideologies in the centre political space in this period tended to be vague and very similar, stressing their commitment to Western democracy and progressive social values. Moreover the need for a full democratisation of Spain's political institutions was the point most stressed by centre parties in their programmes and ideological documents. This was coherent with the position represented by the Suárez Government.

The Christian Democrats in Tácito emphasised freedom of conscience and defended the idea of a pluralistic democracy in which politics would revolve around the search for consensus:

Todas las agrupaciones que sencillamente parten, como nosotros, del supuesto elemental básico de que el hombre, todo hombre, es libre a la hora de pensar, y debe serlo cuando intenta plasmar su pensamiento, aún a riesgo de equivocarse, tienen una gama de opiniones, y sus actitudes son siempre fruto de acuerdos, transacciones y compromisos que buscan el término medio o el punto más común de su pensamiento<sup>23</sup>.

This type of political integration, based on the idea of dialogue and negotiation, would rest on the assumption that no political group had the monopoly of the truth. This pluralistic conception of democracy is shared by the Liberals, for instance in the ideological declaration of the Partido Demócrata Popular of Ignacio Camuñas:

Si es cierto que nosotros, Liberales, buscamos el progreso, mediante la razón, ello presupone que somos fundamentalmente la ideología antidogmática por esencia, tolerante por definición. (...) Y porque una filosofía Liberal es profundamente tolerante, se convierte en el campo político en el puntal de la defensa de los derechos de la minoría<sup>24</sup>.

The other Liberal group, the Federación de Partidos Demócratas y Liberales of Garrigues, defined itself as "Democrático, Liberal, Social, Regional" in that order. The PSD leader Fernández Ordóñez declared that

el cambio democrático como solución inesquivable para el futuro del país parte de un hecho muy sencillo: el reconocimiento del pueblo como protagonista de la vida política y titular de la última legitimidad del poder. (...) La transformación del régimen español en un Estado democrático no podrá, por tanto, hacerse con simples adaptaciones

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<sup>23</sup> Tácito, Op.cit., p.20.

<sup>24</sup> Ignacio Camuñas, Partido Demócrata Popular, Madrid, Avance-Mañana Editoriales, 1977, p.52.

de la situación vigente, sino que requerirá un profundo cambio de nuestras instituciones políticas, con modificaciones legislativas de rango constitucional<sup>25</sup>.

The Centro Democrático parties agreed in advocating democracy and pluralism, and the way to achieve it: through dialogue and national reconciliation. Since Suárez's action in government was compatible with this, cooperation between CD and the Government in order to restore democracy was feasible.

The possibility of inter-party cooperation was increased by the basic consensus between these groups on other potentially conflictual issues, such as the role of the Church and the territorial organisation of the State, one of the most complex problems of the transition period. The position adopted by the Church hierarchy with respect to political parties defused a sensitive issue, and all the centre groups favoured the deconfessionalisation of the State, even the Christian Democrats in Tácito:

Pensamos que el problema religioso del hombre, por ser libre, es personal e íntimo, y sólo nos debe de interesar en su aspecto externo, cuando de algún modo influye en el hacer social. No podemos, sin embargo, dejar de reconocer el carácter predominante en España de la religión católica y de propugnar la libertad e independencia de las competencias de la sociedad civil y la Iglesia, con supresión recíproca de todo tipo de privilegios en sus respectivas esferas de actuación<sup>26</sup>.

With regard to the regional question, all the centre groups recognised the need to concede some degree of autonomy to the "historic" regions of Catalonia and the Basque Country, and to reform the country's highly centralised territorial administration. Joaquín Garrigues' Partido Demócrata was defined as regional, "porque propugna la organización estatal sobre la base de la autonomía política, administrativa, económica y cultural de las regiones dentro de la unidad de España"<sup>27</sup>, and Fernández Ordóñez advocated "una estructura descentralizada y diversa"<sup>28</sup>. Tácito also proposed a reorganisation of the State territorial administration,

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<sup>25</sup> Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, La España necesaria, Op.cit., p.55.

<sup>26</sup> Tácito, Op.cit., pp.28-9.

<sup>27</sup> Joaquín Garrigues Walker, Partido Demócrata. Una política para España, Avance-Mañana Editoriales, Madrid, 1976 , p.17.

<sup>28</sup> Speech on the launching of the Partido Social Demócrata in Madrid, reproduced in Fernández Ordóñez, La España necesaria, Op.cit., p. 61.

recognising that Franco's repressive centralism had threatened the unity of the State:

Pensamos que el reconocimiento del hecho diferencial de los pueblos que componen el Estado español supondría un elemento positivo en el reforzamiento de la estructura político-administrativa común<sup>29</sup>.

In short, there was broad agreement between the Government and CD on the need for democracy, the concession of a degree of autonomy to the historic regions, the principle of fiscal reform and separation of Church and State. It could be suggested that agreement on the dismantling of the worst excesses of a dictatorship was not difficult to reach. In particular, the emphasis placed on these issues shows that they were the real political priority of the day, and that the political stability of the country depended on their being resolved quickly and peacefully. The democratisation of the State was therefore at the top of the hierarchy of objectives of the CD parties, and established a point of encounter with the Suárez Government.

But on more long term questions regarding the ideal model of society defended by these groups, differences do emerge. When the different proposals for the organisation of society and the economy are examined, the possibility of conflict between CD parties can be detected. Joaquín Garrigues, in his ideological statement as leader of the liberal Partido Demócrata, made much of the need to reduce the role of the State and emphasised individual responsibility as the key to a free and competitive society:

Los tres pilares que sustentan nuestro edificio ideológico son: defensa de una libertad real para todos, limitación al cada vez más omnímodo poder gubernamental y garantía de la iniciativa y la propiedad privada como motores de la actividad económica<sup>30</sup>.

Here there was a potential clash with those centre politicians who had followed a long career of service to the State. Garrigues complained that "los hombres y mujeres de Gobierno, a todos los niveles y en todo el mundo occidental, detentan cada vez mayores poderes y

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<sup>29</sup> Tácito, Op.cit., pp.26-7.

<sup>30</sup> Joaquín Garrigues, Partido Demócrata, Op.cit., p.40. Garrigues identified his constituency as "los que quieren seguir dependiendo de su iniciativa particular y de su esfuerzo, que no quieren que el estado se convierta en un "padre generoso", y distribuya sus favores y prebendas en razón de decisiones burocráticas" (ibid., p.37).

facultades en detrimento de las libertades individuales"<sup>31</sup>. The senior functionaries in the PSD and those Independents supporting Suárez's Presidency from within the State structure were unlikely to share this desire to cut down the powers of Big Government. Fernández Ordóñez, at the launching of the Partido Social Demócrata de la Región Centro, made clear his distance from the position of Garrigues, stating that

si respetamos la economía de concurrencia como instrumento principal de los recursos, exigimos con toda firmeza la acción del sector público como institución rectificadora a través del sistema tributario y del gasto redistributivo<sup>32</sup>

The Christian Democrats in Tácito, perhaps less forcefully, followed a similar line:

La sociedad debe ser más justa y solidaria y debe alcanzarse una mayor igualdad entre los hombres, sin matar ni la iniciativa ni el estímulo para el esfuerzo personal. Y el Estado, por ello, tiene la obligación de intervenir para lograr una mayor justicia social y distributiva y evitar los excesos del individualismo y del egoísmo de los hombres<sup>33</sup>.

So the programmatic positions of the CD parties reveal a certain tension over the role of the State in securing social justice. It is clear that, even beyond the common aim of democracy, the centrist orientation of these groups provided them with much common ground, particularly in view of the doctrinal tendencies of the parties to their left and right. The PSOE in 1977 was an openly Marxist party, with a radical membership and a programme which recognised the class struggle as the motor of history<sup>34</sup>, while AP's nostalgic discourse identified it as the party of the Francoist upper-middle classes<sup>35</sup>. This practically closed off the possibility of exit for the CD groups, making UCD the best option for maximising their political influence.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p.36.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.60. Fernández Ordóñez even went as far as to state that "el sector público debidamente controlado, clarificado en su ámbito y en su gestión, desburocratizado, ajeno a su intervencionismo discriminatorio, debe construir en España la gran palanca movilizadora de un desarrollo diferente para alcanzar una sociedad distinta" (Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, Qué son los socialdemócratas, Barcelona, La Gaya Ciencia, 1976, p.63).

<sup>33</sup> José Luis Alvarez, España desde el centro, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1978, p.15.

<sup>34</sup> For instance, as late as May 1978 Alfonso Guerra declared that "el PSOE sigue siendo marxista"; El País, 10 May 1978, p.11.

<sup>35</sup> See the neo-Francoist rhetoric in Manuel Fraga, Alianza Popular, Bilbao. Albia, 1977.

But the existence of conflicting longer-term objectives amongst the sub-groups cannot be ignored if cooperation is to be analysed in terms of purposive political participation. One UCD leader identified the problem:

UCD se ha generado alrededor de una tarea específica que es dotar a España de una nueva Constitución democrática (...) Mientras la tarea está por realizarse se produce esa suma de integración de personas de muy diferente procedencia pero faltándole una auténtica cohesión ideológica<sup>36</sup>.

The common goal of the Constitution could only serve as a common denominator during the constituent period, and therefore firmer bases for durable cooperation would have to be sought.

### 3.3. The origins of UCD deputies

Programmatic statements can reveal the extent to which the coalitional parties differed over basic ideological goals. However, programmes do not say everything about a party's political goals, since they generally avoid mentioning the specific interests which a party aims to defend. Moreover, the largest sector in UCD, the Independents, published no programme or ideological statement, and the speeches of Suárez do not go beyond the need for democracy through consensus and a vague reformism. One Christian Democrat claimed that the Independents "no tenían ninguna definición ideológica, eran absolutamente neutrales, les daba lo mismo una cosa que otra"<sup>37</sup>. In order to complete the picture, and to establish what, if anything, the Independents would represent, it is important to examine their social and professional characteristics. This analysis will also set the ideological positions of the CD parties in the context of the social and professional backgrounds of their deputies.

An important dimension on which the UCD group in the Congress can be analysed is the involvement of deputies in the Franco regime. This divides the UCD parliamentary elite into two groups. Table 3.3. indicates that out of 165 UCD deputies in the Congress, 100 had been on the pay-roll of the Franco State, whilst 65 had no direct link. The group of Independents has the largest proportion of deputies originating from the State structure - 42

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<sup>36</sup> Interview C34.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

out of 57 - but the other groups also had many members in the same category. In particular, the regionalists had 15 out of 17 and the Social Democrats 12 out of 18, revealing them to be the groups sociologically and professionally closest to the Independents. The other CD parties were less compromised with the regime: the PP had 13 out of 30 deputies who had worked for the State, the Christian Democrats 10 out of 21 and the Liberals 8 out of 22.

More significant differences come when we try to measure the degree of involvement in politics in the period of the dictatorship. Of the 100 who had had some activity within the State structure, 35 of them were functionaries and other kinds of state employee (here defined as administrative involvement), and the remaining 65 had followed careers involving some kind of political commitment to the Franco regime<sup>38</sup>; in the Movimiento, in the Cortes, or as senior officials of ministries and other State institutions. The distribution of this involvement in the State Administration amongst the component groups of UCD suggests that the Independents had closer ties to the Franco dictatorship than the CD deputies, although there were numerous exceptions to this pattern on both sides. The Independents had the largest proportion of Francoist politicians: 31 out of the 57 had been heavily compromised with the regime. The regionalist group had even higher levels of participation in the Franco regime: 11 out of 17 deputies had been active in regime politics. The distribution of the 44 ex-Procuradores amongst the different currents in UCD is interesting: 28 of them were Independents, and a further 3 members of the PGI. In other words, almost three quarters of UCD parliamentarians who had been in the Francoist Cortes belonged to the group closest to Adolfo Suárez. Only 7 belonged to the Partido Popular or the PDC, and none to the Liberals. In the PP group 9 out of the 30 deputies had been politically involved, while Social Democrats had 6 Francoist politicians, including their leader, Fernández Ordóñez. In other CD groups, however, the deputies from the State Administration had generally occupied posts without political responsibilities. The Liberals and the Christian Democrats had the lowest number of Francoist politicians - 2 out of 22 and 6 out of 21 respectively.

The political and professional backgrounds of the deputies in each of the UCD groups

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<sup>38</sup> Here I define political participation in the regime as functionaries and senior technicians of the Administration, membership of the Movimiento or the Syndical Organisations, Francoist economic institutions, activity in municipal or provincial politics, and of course, membership of the Francoist Cortes. Administrative participation normally implied a professional background in the public sector, as functionaries, teachers, academics, but in such a way as could not be reasonably described as implying a political commitment to the dictatorship.



give a strong indication of the kinds of interests they would aim to defend: the Independents, regionalists and Social Democrats, and an important sector of the Partido Popular (including the Tácitos), were strongly committed to the State, and particularly the higher ranks of the State Administration<sup>39</sup>. This is confirmed by the biographies of their leaders. Adolfo Suárez and Rodolfo Martín Villa were archetypal Francoist administrators, trained in the Movimiento, and promoted to political office after Franco's death<sup>40</sup>, and Social Democrat leader Fernández Ordóñez had been President of the INI<sup>41</sup>. Regional leaders such as Meilán Gil and Enrique Sánchez de León had been parliamentarians and high level administrators in the Franco regime (and Manuel Clavero, as Rector of Seville University and consequently Procurador, was clearly not a strong opponent of the dictatorship). Pío Cabanillas, leader of the Partido Popular, had even been a minister under Franco, although he was sacked for his aperturismo. This sector of UCD had a strong interest in keeping political change under control, as it was strongly identified with the State administration. Many of the Independents had followed careers in the Movimiento and the Syndical Organisation, sectors of the State bureaucracy which had been abolished by Suárez's reform. Their inclusion in UCD responded to Suárez's need for political personnel, and his own interest in protecting a sector in which he had grown politically, and on which he would perhaps depend in the future.

The remaining sector of UCD, comprising the Liberals, most Christian Democrats and an important sector of the Partido Popular, had less visible links with the Franco regime, and some had even formed part of the tolerated opposition. Liberal leader Garrigues was a businessman backed by powerful financial interests. PDC leader Alvarez de Miranda was a lawyer and property developer distinguished by a long involvement in the juanista opposition. The Vice-President of the Partido Popular, Emilio Attard, was a magistrate and local notable

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<sup>39</sup> The convergence of interests between azules, Partido Popular and Social Democrats is reflected in Alfonso Osorio's account of the negotiations over the UCD lists (in Trayectoria política de un ministro de la Corona, Op.cit.). Osorio wrote of "la primera reunión de la ponencia de Ministros para un examen previo de las listas de candidatos que presentan los partidos de coalición Centro. Landelino (Lavilla) defiende a los del PP y Fernando Abril a los socialdemócratas" (p.305).

<sup>40</sup> Martín Villa once stated that "Soy un servidor del Estado; más que político soy un funcionario estatal" (Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.53); this indicates the "non-ideological" basis of the political activity of many Independents.

<sup>41</sup> In fact, Osorio wrote in his diary that "a Alvarez de Miranda le preocupa la posible incorporación de los socialdemócratas de Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, pues piensa que no son más que unos cuantos altos funcionarios que no tienen ni partido ni estructura política" (Trayectoria política de un ministro de la Corona, Op.cit., p.305).

of Valencia, linked to the Liberal opposition to Franco and to powerful financial interests. An idea of their socio-political position and the interests they would aim to defend can be drawn from an examination of the characteristics of their elected deputies. I have tested these biographies for evidence of involvement with two of the important social actors which one would expect to have links to a political party of the centre-right: the business and financial sectors, and the Church<sup>42</sup>.

An examination of the UCD group in the Congress shows that 61 deputies had significant private sector economic links (in the form of part-time directorships and consultancies, or as full-time businessmen)<sup>43</sup>. The spread of these links across the UCD families is significant (see Table 3.4.). First of all, two of the groups most compromised with the Franco regime - the Social Democrats and the regionalists, had very limited private sector economic links (4 deputies out of 18 and 5 out of 17 respectively). Similarly, whilst 16 Independents had significant business interests, this amounts to only a quarter of that group; a group again closely associated with the regime. The highest numbers of deputies with economic interests were to be found amongst the Liberals (12 out of 22), Partido Popular (14 out of 30) and the Christian Democrats (10 out of 21). The picture which emerges is that of a parliamentary elite in which the groups most associated with the regime have the least private economic interests, and those groups least associated have the highest number of businessmen. Moreover, it is interesting to look at the distribution of economic interests tied to the State (directorships of public companies, participation in Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture etc.), which affected 22 deputies. 8 of these were Independents, 4 came from the Partido Popular, 4 were Christian Democrats, 4 were Regionalists, and 2 Social Democrats. The Liberal businessmen, therefore, were all exclusively private sector businessmen, and could be expected to defend certain "free-market" ideals, and certain financial and business interests against the interests of the State, while the situation of deputies with State economic interests, or none at all (mainly Social Democrats and Independents) would be more favourable to State intervention in the economy.

The Christian Democrats, who were associated by definition, had strong links to the

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<sup>42</sup> Using data from Díaz Nosty, Radiografía de las nuevas Cortes, Op.cit.

<sup>43</sup> Moreover, unsurprisingly, the UCD parliamentary groups had a very high average income, demonstrating that it was essentially a party representing a certain economic and social elite (Bonifacio de la Cuadra and Soledad Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Madrid, Saltés, 1981, p.183).

Church, as did the sector of the Partido Popular which had been involved in Tácito. Although our analysis of written documents has revealed that these groups did not aspire to an organic link between Church and State, the interests of the Church went beyond the confessionality of the State, in particular to the question of education (where powerful private schooling interests were closely linked to the Church) and some social legislation. Links can also be detected with the Opus Dei, but the secretive nature of the organisation makes it difficult to carry out a systematic analysis of its influence on UCD<sup>44</sup>.

This examination of the structure of the UCD elite shows that the fundamental division between the components of the coalition was that between the groups representing the reformist sectors of the Franco regime and the higher ranks of the Public Administration (Independents, regionalists, Social Democrats) and those representing predominantly economic interests (the Liberals and Christian Democrats), and in the case of the Christian Democrats and members of Tácito, the interests of the Church. The Partido Popular, given its heterogeneous composition, does not fit neatly into either category, although a similar division can be detected within its ranks. Added to the analysis of programmatic documents, it can be concluded (simplifying) that the potential conflict of interests and objectives within UCD existed between a State sector in favour of progressive social policies and State intervention in the economy, and a sector representing conservative interests outside the State apparatus, predominantly the Church and the big business and banking sector. This amounts to a basic left-right division, often present in large parties.

### 3.4. The policy trade-off: The barons and the Constitution

The basis on which the different UCD sub-groups intended to establish cooperation confirms the temporary nature of the settlement achieved in the constituent process. There was basic agreement over the biggest issue, the nature of the transition to democracy. However the transition itself could not be a lasting source of interdependency. Articles and statements in the press can give us some idea of what Suárez and his nucleus were offering and what the various UCD leaders hoped to get out of the coalition.

The policy commitments made by the President before the 1977 elections were mostly

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<sup>44</sup> Preston claims that around one third of UCD Parliamentarians were members of Opus Dei (The triumph of democracy in Spain, Op.cit., p.112). However this appears to have cut across sub-groups.

unspecific. For Suárez, the UCD Government would be a continuation of the reform project he initiated in 1976:

Somos un país con recursos limitados, con deficientes estructuras, con desigualdades irritantes y con una legislación que no se acomoda a la realidad de 1977. (...) Hemos sacado adelante la Reforma Política. Ahora debemos llevar adelante las demás reformas que este gran país y este gran pueblo necesitan<sup>45</sup>.

In line with the unspecific nature of his proposals, the tone of the speech reflected his intention to govern through consensus and "elaborar una Constitución en colaboración con todos los grupos representados en las Cortes, cualquiera que sea su número de escaños"<sup>46</sup>. That this was the only explicit political objective of UCD is reflected in statements by other leaders of the coalition. Juan Manuel Fanjul, candidate for Madrid, claimed that "UCD no se separará hasta dar al país una Constitución"<sup>47</sup>, implying that the coalition would not survive the Constitution.

The Tácito José Luis Alvarez later justified the coalition of Centro Democrático with Suárez in terms of their convergence in the common objective of a peaceful transition to democracy:

El objetivo primario del presidente Suárez era el mismo en el que coincidían aquellos partidos: la instauración de un sistema democrático pleno, pacíficamente y desde la legalidad. (...) Por ello, todos esos partidos apoyaron esa política, que era la suya, sin separarse en absoluto de su propia ideología y de su estrategia<sup>48</sup>.

This saw the taxi-parties cooperating with the Suárez Government in the pursuit of a specific goal, but without losing their distinctive political identity. The Christian Democrat leader Alvarez de Miranda explicitly ruled out the possibility of the coalition consolidating as a unitary party:

La Unión de Centro Democrático se perfila no como un futuro partido homogéneo, sino como una coalición constitucional. Responde a un pacto entre quienes han llevado la iniciativa de la reforma y quienes quieren que ésta

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> El País, 20 May 1977, p.11.

<sup>48</sup> "Los partidos del centro", El País, 2 June 1977, reproduced in España desde el centro, Op.cit., p.130.

termine con la elaboración de una Constitución auténticamente democrática<sup>49</sup>.

For Liberal leader Garrigues, the coalition was justified by the fact that "todos (los) objetivos alcanzados ya por el presidente Suárez en su mayor parte, eran básicamente los de la oposición democrática"<sup>50</sup>. The FPDL had advocated as early as April 1976 the kind of Government-Opposition pact for a Constitution represented by UCD, demanding a "nuevo Gobierno con suficiente credibilidad ante las fuerzas políticas y sindicales del país para que, en colaboración con ellas, se elabore un proyecto de Constitución y de Ley electoral"<sup>51</sup>. The UCD coalition was a "convergencia entre lo que representa el presidente Suárez y lo que representan los partidos Liberales, democristianos y socialdemócratas de la Oposición moderada: el objetivo último de consolidar la democracia". Garrigues admitted that the alliance with Suárez was also a simple and flawed vehicle to reach political power: "Suárez sin nosotros podía ganar, pero no convencer. Nosotros sin él podíamos dar testimonio, pero no podíamos ganar.(...) La Unión de Centro Democrático es quizás la peor de las opciones que se presentan al electorado español ... si se excluyen todas las demás"<sup>52</sup>. This suggests participation under almost "coercive" conditions - there appeared to be little choice but to join UCD on the Government's terms.

Fernández Ordóñez's PSD released a document stating three conditions for participation in CD:

1. El compromiso de apertura de un proceso constituyente que desemboque en la promulgación de una Constitución plenamente democrática.
2. La adhesión a un pacto constitucional con el resto de las fuerzas democráticas, si llega a ser acordado.
3. (...) Un programa electoral donde se cumplan los principios básicos de la ideológica socialdemócrata y que controle las condiciones de credibilidad democrática de los candidatos<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> "El difícil parto del Centro Democrático", El País, 15 May 1977, p.17.

<sup>50</sup> "Un compromiso histórico", El País, 3 June 1977, reproduced in Joaquín Garrigues Walker, Un año antes, un año después, Madrid, Unión Editorial, 1978, p.95.

<sup>51</sup> "Manifiesto de la Federación de Partidos Demócratas y Liberales", in Partido Demócrata, Op.cit., pp.89-92.

<sup>52</sup> "Un compromiso histórico", Op.cit., p.99.

<sup>53</sup> Document of the Partido Social Demócrata, cited in Fernández Ordóñez, La España necesaria, Op.cit., pp.75-6.

So it emerges that the objective of a democratic Constitution was the main point of encounter between the CD parties and Suárez, although this objective would have to be compatible with the taxi-parties' own programmes. Other documents show that members of CD, especially those with a history of opposition to Francoism, accepted UCD as a means to a specific end, and did not hide their resentment at the supposedly coercive methods employed by Suárez. Oscar Alzaga of the PDC justified UCD in the following terms:

No es éste el momento de profundizar en el análisis crítico de los no muy afortunados criterios que guiaron la confección de las listas de nuestra coalición, o de la peculiar forma en que se ha enfocado la campaña centrista. Baste con dejar constancia de que este candidato no comulga con entusiasmos delirantes a la vista de cómo han ido las cosas. (...) Espero que los hombres de talante democrático y moderado en las elecciones siguientes tengamos una opción más atractiva que votar. Por ahora, lo más importante es garantizar que va a haber tales elecciones. Hoy es la obligación ineludible de contribuir a consolidar la democracia de una vez por todas para nuestro pueblo<sup>54</sup>.

This is a clear enough warning of lukewarm commitment to the party from an elite participant who was later to play a key role in the disintegration of UCD. Another CD leader whose departure hastened the party's collapse, Fernández Ordóñez, later made clear that his Social Democratic group saw participation in UCD as "esencialmente una posposición de nuestro proyecto propio en favor de la consolidación del proyecto democrático para España"<sup>55</sup>. These statements make clear that many of the key participants saw the coalition as limited to the passing of a Constitution and the consolidation of the democratic reform. Without the pressures of a pre-electoral period, this coalition would probably have been impossible: despite the obvious electoral dependence on Suárez of the CD parties, three of the signatories of the founding document - the Liberals Enrique Larroque and Juan García Madariaga, and the Social Democrat Eurico de la Peña - abandoned the coalition after disagreements with the leadership, thus ending their political careers. This gives some idea of the reluctance of centrist barones to give up their political autonomy, even in the face of the dominant position

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<sup>54</sup> "Votar centro tiene sentido", El País Especial Electoral, 12 June 1977, p.XXV. Alzaga had previously advocated the union of Liberals, Christian Democrats and Social Democrats with the Government, since "la coincidencia de estas fuerzas, tanto se definen de centro derecha como de centro izquierda, puede ser total a la hora de redactar un programa constitucional, que es la tarea a abordar" (Alzaga, "Visión retrospectiva del proceso constituyente actual", in Club Siglo XXI, España y su monarquía. Conferencias 1976-77, Madrid, Fomento Editorial, 1977, pp.59-72).

<sup>55</sup> Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, Palabras en libertad, Barcelona, Argos Vergara, 1982, p.31.

of Suárez in the electoral game. The UCD was a necessary vehicle for achieving parliamentary representation and a Constitution, and they had little affection for or loyalty towards it.

The difficulties involved in consolidating such a coalition were significant. The coalitional parties aimed not only to write a Constitution, but also to defend the conflicting interests I have attributed to them above, and intended to continue cooperating with Suárez as long as they were able to do so. A key feature making cooperation possible was Suárez's reluctance to go beyond the specific question of political transition and a vague idea of social progress in his speeches. This allowed the ideological divisions within UCD to be swept under the carpet in the short term, as the broad issues of the transition acted to bring the sub-groups together. The unity of the coalition was also facilitated by the positions of the other political forces, as one UCD leader explains:

UCD surge como un partido omnibus, un partido donde hay quizás un elemento aglutinante que es hacer el cambio político contrastando entre la posición rupturista del PSOE y la posición en cierto modo continuista que tiene AP en 1977 (...). Ocupa un espacio de centro (...) que se caracteriza más por sus reafirmaciones negativas que por sus reafirmaciones positivas; aquí no está lo que representa el socialismo marxista. aquí no está lo que representa la derecha conservadora autoritaria<sup>56</sup>.

The radical positions adopted by UCD's political rivals precluded any possibility of exit on the part of the coalitional parties, and enabled Suárez to campaign on a message which, despite its general, unsectarian nature, was distinctive in the context of the first democratic elections.

The CD parties not only coincided with Suárez in the need for a Constitution through consensus, but were dependent on each other, and in particular on Suárez himself, for its achievement. The President controlled the electoral resources for achieving parliamentary representation, and therefore political influence, and occupied a pivotal position in the negotiations between political forces. His successful piloting of the pre-election reform made him indispensable in achieving consensus between parties in the constituent process. Liberal leader Garrigues Walker publicly recognised that UCD had no choice but to let Suárez control the process:

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<sup>56</sup> Interview C34.

Adolfo Suárez es en estos momentos el único hombre que dentro de la Unión de Centro Democrático posee capital político suficiente como para ejercer las funciones de presidente del partido y presidente del Gobierno. (...) El liderazgo de Suárez estará lógicamente limitado en el tiempo, tal y como es usual en los regímenes democráticos. Pero yo pienso que ahora debemos apoyarle, puesto que sigue representando la opción más segura de cara a la consolidación de la democracia<sup>57</sup>.

The CD groups may have represented around half of the UCD parliamentary group in the Congress, but they would be in no position to challenge the President as long as he retained control over the essential resources needed to direct the constituent process. Suárez's exceptional position in the political system - described earlier as situational charisma - created a high level of dependency of the sub-groups on his leadership for the purposes of the constituent process. This dependency was underlined by the basic agreement between these groups on the fundamentals of political reform. The potential for conflict lay in the temporary nature of both Suárez's exceptional concentration of political power, and the uniqueness of the common goal around which the sub-groups would unite to cooperate. The original UCD coalition had the sole purpose of passing a democratic Constitution and were dependent on Suárez for the achievement of this purpose, but interdependency would not necessarily extend to stable cooperation in defence of more specific and conflictual objectives. The temporary nature of the CD leaders' commitment to the UCD is explicit in the public statements cited here.

#### **4. Governing in the constituent period: The shared purpose of democratisation**

##### **4.1. Coalition or party? The first UCD Government**

For all the CD parties' adherence to the coalition was conditional and limited to the constituent project, the balance of power in the emerging party failed to recognise this. The formation of a new government after the 1977 elections confirmed that UCD, rather than a coalition of autonomous parties, was essentially a political instrument of Adolfo Suárez and his ministerial allies from the previous Cabinet. The presence of the CD groups introduced an element of diffusion in the formation of UCD, but the internal dynamic of the new organisation was marked by the centralisation of authority around the party leader. These

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<sup>57</sup> "No se puede seguir trampeando", ABC, 20 September 1977, pp.126-8.



conditions were favourable to coherent joint action and to the creation of a centralised political party. The allocation of governmental power reflected the weakness of the UCD sub-groups, and limited their ability to influence the policy process.

The first UCD Government was formed after lengthy consultations in the Moncloa with separate delegations of parliamentarians from each of the coalitional groups. The negotiations revolved around the questions of ministerial posts, and the consolidation of the centrist parliamentary group, and of a unified political party<sup>58</sup>. A document of Parliamentary Union was signed on 28 June, by which the coalitional parties committed themselves to vote as a group on the defence of democracy, the monarchy, the unity of the State, the recognition of the autonomies and the promotion of a socially advanced market economy<sup>59</sup>. The strength of Suárez's position in imposing parliamentary and party unity was based on the electoral failure of those parties which had refused to join the coalition (most notably the EDC), and the electoral document which the coalitional parties had signed<sup>60</sup>. The only protest against presidential domination came from the Social Democrats, who initially refused to sign the parliamentary Union, demanding guarantees that the UCD would have a progressive direction, democratic structures, and that the Social Democratic identity of those Parliamentarians would be respected<sup>61</sup>. The Social Democrat leader Fernández Ordóñez had close links with some members of the Socialist party, and his departure to form a different coalition was not unfeasible, a situation which gave his faction a relatively powerful position amongst CD groups. Clearly this pressure was successful, as Suárez announced that "La Unión de Centro Democrático hará una política de centro-izquierda y propugnará profundos cambios en los terrenos económico, social, cultural y político"<sup>62</sup>. Moreover, such a statement was not inconsistent with the reformist sentiments Suárez had expressed before the elections, and in

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<sup>58</sup> "Suárez procura consolidar el grupo parlamentario de la Unión de Centro Democrático", El País, 21 June 1977, p.13.

<sup>59</sup> See Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.56.

<sup>60</sup> UCD, Manual para 22 millones de electores, Madrid, 1977.

<sup>61</sup> "Los socialdemócratas de Fernández Ordóñez se resisten a integrarse en el Partido de Centro", El País, 25 June 1977, p.13. In his book La España necesaria, Op.cit., Fernández Ordóñez explained this reluctance in terms of the PSD's fear that "el proceso de fusión conduciría inevitablemente a una futura derechización del colectivo" (p.79). This indicates the PSD's awareness of being in a differentiated coalition, and in a minority position in proposing certain objectives.

<sup>62</sup> "UCD hará una política de centro-izquierda", El País, 29 June 1977, p.1.

view of the Francoist background of many Social Democrats, it was natural that Suárez should seek to integrate them into the dominant coalition.

Obviously presidential domination had its limits, and the formation of the first UCD Government was an exchange between the CD parties and the President on the basis of the political resources offered and needed by both sides. Suárez needed parliamentary support for his investiture as President and to enable him to govern, and this clearly was not possible without the support of the CD groups. The President secured this support by offering ministries to the leaders of the main coalitional parties. All the major barons received government posts, as Table 3.5. reveals, and the Presidencies of the Congress and the Senate were left to Alvarez de Miranda (PDC) and Antonio Fontán (FPDL). In theory, any one of the barons could have made it difficult for Suárez to govern, but in practice it was unlikely given their support for his programme and their inability to survive politically, and particularly electorally, alone, which closed off the possibility of exit.

In view of this, it is an exaggeration to suggest, as does Huneus<sup>63</sup>, that the formation of the Government took place along consociational lines. First of all, the use of the concept of consociationalism is inappropriate for the study of the internal dynamic of UCD<sup>64</sup>. The accepted definition of consociationalism requires the existence of subcultural cleavages which are articulated (pillarised) from mass to elite level<sup>65</sup>. Despite the possible conflicts of interests, it cannot be seriously argued that Christian Democrats, Liberals, Social Democrats and Independents in UCD represented these kinds of cleavages. Instead they represented different sectoral interests within what had been the ruling class, interests which were often only articulated at elite level (for example, State business versus private business; Catholic hierarchy versus secular State Administration). They were factions, in the sense that they were political groups which behaved in a more or less coordinated manner<sup>66</sup>, although in many cases this was due as much to friendship and similarity of social circles as to shared political beliefs.

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<sup>63</sup> As expressed by Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.197.

<sup>64</sup> As Gunther has argued in "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.468.

<sup>65</sup> Arend Lijphart, "Typologies of democratic systems", Comparative Political Studies, 1, 1968, pp.3-44.

<sup>66</sup> The definition is taken from Giovanni Sartori, Parties and party systems, Op.cit., p.75. This allows us to call the UCD groups factions even though they were not formally organised (the requirement for faction stipulated by Richard Rose, "Parties, factions and tendencies in Britain", Political Studies, February 1964, p.37).

The evidence is that UCD never applied a consociational strategy for the regulation of internal conflict, in the classic definition of the term. According to Lijphart, a consociational system implies a number of characteristics which in the case of UCD were not present; in particular, mutual veto rights for the different subcultures, a coalition formation bargaining process which takes place after the election and is not influenced by actions before the election (see previous Chapter for examples of such actions), and, fundamentally, the principle of proportionality in the allocation of public resources<sup>67</sup>. Only this latter characteristic can be detected to any extent in the case of UCD, and even then public resources and power positions were not allocated on a strictly proportional basis.

Since there was no way of calculating how many votes were represented by the different factions, the only basis for proportional allocation of power positions was parliamentary representation. The first UCD Government did not accurately reflect the factional composition of the parliamentary group. As a senior UCD leader stated, Suárez

no buscaba una proporcionalidad (...). En cada caso ha buscado que estuvieran presentes todos los grupos, pero buscando siempre no que los designaran ellos, sino que los designaba él en confianza de las capacidades que creía que tenía cada uno, y la capacidad que tenían de trabajar en un proyecto común<sup>68</sup>.

According to Arias Salgado, the distribution of power was carried out "con una cierta discrecionalidad no sujeta al puro reparto; nunca hubo ese reparto estricto, matemático"<sup>69</sup>.

This is confirmed by an examination of the composition of the first UCD Government. Whilst all groups were present, Suárez was able to overrepresent those factions closest to him (the Independents, the PP, the Social Democrats and the regional parties), and underrepresent the other coalitional parties (Liberals and Christian Democrats). Table 3.5. shows that in the first UCD Government, whilst the Independents had one minister for every 7 deputies<sup>70</sup>, the

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<sup>67</sup> See the summary by Samuel Eldersveld, "Political elite linkages in the Dutch consociational system", in Kay Lawson (ed.), Political parties and linkage. A comparative perspective, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1980, pp.160-1.

<sup>68</sup> Interview C44.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>70</sup> Most of the "Independent" ministers were not deputies; however I feel it is justified to consider them as belonging to the same faction as the Independents in Parliament, since they were essentially Suárez's choices, and were politically close to him.

PP 1:7.75, the regionalists 1:8.5, and the Social Democrats one minister for every nine deputies, the remaining coalitional parties had less presence in the Government than their parliamentary strength would have suggested. The Liberals had one minister for every eleven deputies, and the Christian Democrats only one minister for their 21 deputies (although their leader Alvarez de Miranda was elected President of the Congress). In short, Suárez incorporated the leaders of the coalitional factions into the first UCD Government, but did not form a Cabinet reflecting the composition of his parliamentary group. Instead, while the Independents amounted to a third of the parliamentary group, 42% of his ministers were Independents, and over half of these were not even Parliamentarians. Whilst more than a third of the parliamentary group had had no involvement in the Franco regime, only three out of 19 ministers could make a similar boast, whilst 15 ministers had participated in the dictatorship as political appointees. There was also a strong element of continuity with regard to the previous Government: 9 out of the 19 ministers had served in Suárez's first pre-UCD Government. In other words, the formation of the first UCD Government represented the incorporation of the CD barons into a Cabinet which still largely represented a new generation of ex-Francoists who had reached ministerial office after Franco's death, but before democratisation. The barons did not have sufficient unity of action to pressurise Suárez into further concessions, and he was therefore able to form a government with parliamentary support without losing his control over the Cabinet. The UCD dominant coalition consisted of the key groups within the Franco State which had supported the first Suárez Government, with the addition of the Social Democrats and Tácitos.

This process underlines the extent to which the autonomy afforded to UCD barons by their own parties was purely formal. The UCD's legislative strategy was based upon consensus for constitutional issues, usually involving the parliamentary support of the PSOE. This meant that the UCD Government could easily operate without the meagre resources provided by any one faction, whilst the factions themselves were heavily dependent on the other factions, and on the party leadership, for their political survival - they had few real exit options, and each faction controlled negligible zones of uncertainty. To the extent that the factions could pressurise the President, this pressure was averted by the cooptation of factional leaders through the distribution of government portfolios. This introduced a coalitional element into the relationships between sub-groups and the leadership, but this did not extend to influence over the Government's direction. Indeed, given these groups' support for the

constituent process, this was not a requirement for their participation in the short term.

The establishment of the Parliamentary Union, the first step towards transforming the coalition into a unitary party, confirmed the move away from the coalitional logic of formal payoffs to the separate groups. Emilio Attard protested that "no se trataba de un partido, era un pacto de legislatura de todos los partidos que habían integrado la UCD"<sup>71</sup>. But the reality was that the coalitional origins of UCD were quickly forgotten, and the taxi-parties' weakness led to their being dissolved in December 1977<sup>72</sup>. Suárez and his allies were in control of the transition process, and the CD parties, committed above all else to democratisation and lacking significant autonomous resources, had little choice but to accept their dominance.

#### 4.2. Consensus and the Constitution

The passing of a democratic Constitution was the express purpose of the UCD coalition, and as such became the focus of the action of the UCD Governments until 1979. Indeed, Suárez went as far as to announce in Parliament that this was the only political programme of the UCD Government<sup>73</sup>. An examination of the constituent process confirms that the coherence of UCD in this period was the result of the party leadership's control over the key resources necessary for the achievement of the UCD's principal political objective: a democratic Constitution. In particular it provides abundant evidence of the unbalanced relationship between UCD Government and UCD parliamentary group, reflected in the imposition by Suárez of consensus with opposition parties. The broad agreement over the common aim of a democratic Constitution, however, prevented the marginalised factions from rebelling. The benefits offered by the Suárez Government could not be easily found in any other formation, and therefore the CD groups tolerated their limited influence over the process.

Two phases of the constitutional process provide data for this analysis: the work, behind closed doors, of the parliamentary ponencia which drew up the draft of the

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<sup>71</sup> Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.56.

<sup>72</sup> This is analysed more fully in Chapter 4.

<sup>73</sup> "Suárez supedita el programa político de su Gobierno a la aprobación de la Constitución", El País, 6 April 1978, p.1.

Constitution; and the Commission phase, in which the work of the Commission of the Congress is most relevant. The ponencia consisted of 7 deputies, three of whom represented UCD. Interestingly, all three were originally members of the Partido Popular, although of differing political background: José Pedro Pérez Llorca was a diplomat, with limited political involvement in the Franco regime, who was becoming a close advisor of Suárez; Miguel Herrero was a high-ranking functionary, also with limited political responsibilities in the Franco regime, and close to the Tácito Landelino Lavilla; and Gabriel Cisneros had been a prominent Movimiento politician, proposed as a parliamentary candidate by Rodolfo Martín Villa. These three ponentes more or less reflected the balance of power at the very top of UCD, and had a direct line to key members of the Government; they did not accurately represent the composition of the UCD parliamentary group.

The subordination of parliamentary group to Government was confirmed by the delay in calling a meeting of the group to agree a common position over the Constitution until after the completion of the draft of the ponencia. According to the President of the Congress,

la dinámica arrolladora de las elecciones y el ejercicio del poder nos había conducido a improvisar, sin debate previo, un programa electoral en el que se habían adoptado criterios generales (...), pero en el que no se había profundizado más. Y así existían dentro del mosaico de partidos de UCD posiciones bastante antagónicas que no estaban superadas<sup>74</sup>.

This situation troubled the ponentes, who, according to the President of the Constitutional Commission, lacked instructions from any quarter, and whose decisions always faced "el vertiginoso riesgo de su desconocimiento por la generalidad de UCD"<sup>75</sup>. The Government paid little attention to the ponencia in the first few months of its work<sup>76</sup>, probably because it expected the draft text to be changed considerably in negotiations with the other major parties during the Commission phase. According to Miguel Herrero, the meetings of the ponentes with representatives of the Government, Party and parliamentary group - the Ente Coordinador - took few coherent decisions, and failed to give direction; UCD lacked even a

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<sup>74</sup> Alvarez de Miranda, Del contubernio al consenso, Op.cit., p.180.

<sup>75</sup> Emilio Attard, La Constitución por dentro, Barcelona, Argos Vergara, 1983, p.75.

<sup>76</sup> Lavilla, responsible for the coordination of the work of the ponencia with the Government, had few meetings with the UCD ponentes (De la Cuadra and Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Op.cit., p.31).

draft proposal for the Constitution<sup>77</sup>. Rather than the domination of the Government, the ponencia phase demonstrated a certain lack of interest for the parliamentary proceedings, with the result that the draft published in January 1978 was "mucho más parlamentario que gubernamental"<sup>78</sup>. However, it was only parliamentary in the sense that the ponencia had been elected by a parliamentary Commission - the UCD parliamentary group, as mentioned above, did not participate significantly in the work of the ponencia, and some sectors were unpleasantly surprised with aspects of the draft<sup>79</sup>.

The beginning of the sessions of the Constitutional Commission of the Congress marked the arrival on the scene of governmental intervention. The selection of UCD deputies in the Commission was again a reflection of the balance of power represented by the UCD Government, rather than a reflection of the parliamentary group<sup>80</sup>. This situation was confirmed by the document stipulating the norms of action for the UCD deputies on the Commission, which confirmed the dominant hand of the Government: "Cada título tendrá un coordinador a cargo del cual estará la fijación de las posiciones de UCD sobre cada artículo concreto, de acuerdo con la Ponencia de UCD y el representante del Gobierno"<sup>81</sup>. But more important than the composition of the UCD team on the Commission was the interference of the Government in the proceedings. With the two votes of AP, the centre and right had a "mechanical majority" on the Commission, which was exploited by Miguel Herrero. His strategic preference was to use this majority to corner the PSOE into making concessions, against the wishes of the Government, and the first 25 articles were passed this way<sup>82</sup>. The

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<sup>77</sup> Miguel Herrero de Miñón, *Memorias de estío*, Madrid, Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 1993, p.124. Emilio Attard gives a detailed account of the meetings of the Ente Coordinador, which reveal both the lack of agreement and the lack of a coherent process of decision-making, leading to an absence of political direction (La Constitución por dentro, Op.cit., pp.74-83).

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p.126. The balance of evidence supports this assertion, although the author's role as ponente leaves the suspicion he may wish to exaggerate the independence of the ponencia. In the same work Herrero relates examples of presidential pressure on the ponencia, for example over the role of the King in dissolving Parliament (ibid., p.136).

<sup>79</sup> Attard, La Constitución por dentro, Op.cit., p.75.

<sup>80</sup> El País described it as "un equipo disciplinado y moderadamente progresista"; "Los 36 'padres' de la Constitución", 16 April 1978, p.13.

<sup>81</sup> Document reproduced in Attard, La Constitución por dentro, Op.cit., p.84.

<sup>82</sup> De la Cuadra and Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Op.cit., p.44.

PSOE reacted strongly: González declared that "el consenso ha quedado roto" and Guerra denounced that "Esta va a ser la Constitución más reaccionaria de Europa. Es obra, exclusivamente, de UCD y AP. No existe consenso"<sup>83</sup>. Suárez's response was to impose a change of strategy which involved pacting the Constitution, article by article, with the PSOE, outside Parliament<sup>84</sup>. He delegated the negotiations to his right-hand-man Fernando Abril, who was joined by Pérez-Llorca and Arias Salgado<sup>85</sup>, both close to the President (replacing the ponentes). After the decisive meeting of the Executive Committee on 20 May 1978, Arias Salgado announced that "UCD no hará nada que pueda poner en peligro el consenso en los debates de la Constitución y tratará, por encima de todo, de mantenerlo"<sup>86</sup>. The rest of the Constitution was essentially negotiated between UCD and the PSOE (and in some cases other parties) outside the parliamentary framework, and without systematically consulting the parliamentary groups, to the indignation of conservative sectors of the UCD elite<sup>87</sup>.

The two opposed strategies of Suárez/Abril and Herrero were not an incidental disagreement; instead they represented two different ways of seeing UCD's role in the party system, as will emerge later. Suárez's interest in consensus with the Socialists was not just a question of Constitutional consensus and parliamentary power, but also a way of legitimising UCD as a democratic and progressive party, and challenging the PSOE for the progressive elements of the political centre. In any case, Suárez's position was that the maintenance of consensus was more important than the defence of the constitutional preferences of UCD. A senior UCD leader described the process as follows:

No podían prevalecer intereses de partido, sino que tenía que prevalecer el interés del Estado, de consolidar un sistema de libertades, y en el que todos los españoles tuvieran un lugar cómodo y confortable. (...) Era una pieza

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p.55.

<sup>84</sup> Leading to the pacting of ambiguous formulae which in many cases would be difficult to apply. For a criticism of this approach see Miguel Herrero, "Falsas y verdaderas vías del consenso constitucional", Revista de Estudios Políticos, 9, mayo-junio 1979, pp.73-98.

<sup>85</sup> This change of direction and the extra-parliamentary negotiations between UCD and the PSOE are extensively documented. See for example "El nacimiento de la Constitución democrática", Diario 16, Historia de la transición, Op.cit., p.536; Attard, La Constitución por dentro, p.92-99; Herrero, Memorias de estío, p.170-8.

<sup>86</sup> El País, 21 May 1978, p.11.

<sup>87</sup> The UCD Government and parliamentary group was not formally informed of the change of strategy; Alvarez de Miranda, Del contubernio al consenso, Op.cit., p.183.



clave, el consenso, aunque fue muy atacado; provocó muchísimas tensiones dentro del partido<sup>88</sup>.

This "política de Estado" was aimed at integrating the PSOE and other groups into the process of democratisation, even at the expense of ceding to some of their demands. Herrero, a noted opponent of consensus, represented the more conservative sector of UCD, and denied the need to make concessions to the PSOE, preferring instead to use the "mechanical majority" to force the PSOE to bargain on his terms<sup>89</sup>. This view saw the transition as compatible with a "política de partido", aimed at achieving democracy with the least possible cost to the UCD social base, and the conservative interests within it. Herrero's was a high-risk strategy, which could have hampered attempts to integrate the left and nationalists into the new democratic institutions. Suárez and his allies rejected this approach, regarding any concessions made as the price to be paid for a stable democracy. As a result, Herrero was left on the margins of the negotiations, and the governmental line was imposed, reflecting the inability of the UCD right in the parliamentary group to counter the strategies emerging from the Presidency in the constituent period.

The extra-parliamentary negotiations did take into account the positions of UCD factions on a number of occasions, indicating the limits of presidential dominance. One example of this is the negotiations over the constitutional position of the Church. As a concession to the PSOE, UCD had pacted a formula for the constitutional treatment of education (Article 27) which did not expressly guarantee "freedom of education"<sup>90</sup>. This caused angry reactions within those sectors of UCD close to the Church hierarchy, and an offensive against the deal was launched, led by Herrero and Oscar Alzaga<sup>91</sup>. In this case the parliamentary group reacted, and half of the UCD representatives on the Constitutional

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<sup>88</sup> Interview C44.

<sup>89</sup> In a similar way to the Pacts of the Moncloa, where the Liberal Joaquín Garrigues held an analogous position, opposing "concessions" to other political forces ("Gobernar no es ceder", ABC, 20 September 1977).

<sup>90</sup> A popular slogan of the right, meaning the right of parents to send their children to private (usually Catholic) schools in equality of conditions to State schools: in practice this meant State subsidies for private Catholic schooling.

<sup>91</sup> De la Cuadra and Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Op.cit., p.62. The Church aimed to protect its dominant position in private education, withstanding demands for State or parents' intervention in the running of the schools, while maintaining State financial aid (see Roger Blough and Richard Gunther, "Religious conflict and consensus in Spain: A tale of two Constitutions", World Affairs, 143, 1980-81, pp.366-412).

Commission threatened to vote against the Article<sup>92</sup>. This led to a renegotiation of the Article, including greater guarantees for private schools, but making some concessions to the PSOE (a clause was introduced giving teachers and parents the right to participate in the management of schools maintained by public funds)<sup>93</sup>. The Episcopal Conference had stated in November 1977 that "en todo caso ha de quedar garantizada en todos los centros de enseñanza la educación de las nuevas generaciones en conformidad con las convicciones morales y religiosas de los padres y de los alumnos"<sup>94</sup>. Suárez was unable to resist pressures from within his party to respect this demand, and threats of voting indiscipline during the Senate's reading of the text forced him into a further concession - agreeing that the provisions for private education should be applied in conformity with the International Declaration of Human Rights<sup>95</sup>. This suggests that the dominant position of the leadership within the party could be undermined by the intervention of external organisations, which mitigated the situation of dependency in which the conservative CD factions found themselves.

Constitutional issues affecting economic interest groups were less controversial, possibly because of the lesser relevance of the Constitution for these interests. An attempt was made by the UCD right to condition the right to strike to the defence of "professional" interests, although this failed to prosper<sup>96</sup>. Otherwise, issues such as the right to property and inheritance were accepted by all parties without much debate. The amendments proposed by the UCD group in the Senate attempted to obtain clearer recognition of property and entrepreneurial rights, such as full compensation for expropriations and the express protection of "free competition"<sup>97</sup>. Antonio Garrigues, President of the pressure group Asociación para el Progreso de la Dirección (and brother of Liberal faction leader Joaquín), complained that "el principio de la libertad de la empresa está muy diluido por otras declaraciones contenidas en la Constitución que permitirían una planificación abusiva de la vida económica y un

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<sup>92</sup> "El nacimiento de una Constitución democrática", Historia de la transición, Op.cit., p.536.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p.80.

<sup>94</sup> "Los valores morales y religiosos ante la Constitución", Asamblea Plenaria, 26 November 1977, in Jesus Iribarren (ed.), Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal Española 1965-83, Op.cit., pp.439-445.

<sup>95</sup> "UCD y PSOE, nuevamente enfrentados en el tema de la enseñanza", El País, 8 August 1978, p.9.

<sup>96</sup> De la Cuadra and Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Op.cit., p.125.

<sup>97</sup> "Los senadores de UCD, preocupados por los aspectos económicos", El País, 17 August 1978, p.9.

excesivo intervencionismo estatal (...) la definición del modelo económico es incompleta, pero no había otra solución"<sup>98</sup>. Therefore it appears that the sectors of UCD closest to economic interests were unable to push Suárez into a tougher position in the negotiations with the PSOE.

Another indicator of the balance of power within the UCD elite is the treatment of the regional question in the Constitution. Here the conflict of interests between factions is much less clear, although a considerable sector of the UCD parliamentary elite was suspicious of any attempts to bring about a fundamental decentralisation of the State<sup>99</sup>. The most centralist groups, according to Miguel Herrero, were the Social Democrats and ex-Francoists<sup>100</sup>, while Herrero and some others were in favour of a limited degree of decentralisation, but singling out the Basque Country and Catalonia for special Statutes<sup>101</sup>. A quite different position was held by the Minister for the Regions Clavero, leader of the Andalusian party PSLA, whose ministerial post gave him considerable influence in the debate: he argued that the problem of the reorganisation of the State should not only concern the Basque Country and Catalonia, and that the whole country should fit into a "marco autonómico único", thus permitting a degree of self-government for regions such as Andalusia<sup>102</sup>. An interesting document for the analysis of the relative strength of these positions, and the nature of the decision-making process in UCD, is the account of a meeting of the Ente Coordinador referred to earlier<sup>103</sup>. This reveals that the position of Suárez was that the autonomous regimes should be similar,

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<sup>98</sup> "La definición del modelo económico es incompleta, pero no había otra solución", El País, 24 November 1978, p.12.

<sup>99</sup> According to the Communist ponente Jordi Solé Tura "la presión unitaria de la derecha española, que claramente expresaba Alianza Popular, (...) También atravesaba las filas centristas" (Nacionalidades y nacionalismos en España, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1985, p.104).

<sup>100</sup> Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.154.

<sup>101</sup> A position outlined in Herrero's lecture "Las posibilidades regionales de la Monarquía", in Club Siglo XXI, España y su Monarquía, Op.cit., pp.25-37.

<sup>102</sup> See his speech "Uniformidad y variedad regional: el caso de Andalucía", in Club Siglo XXI, España y su Monarquía, Op.cit., pp.229-241.

<sup>103</sup> Attard, La Constitución por dentro, Op.cit., pp.74-80.

gradually increasing their powers<sup>104</sup>; a position close to that of Clavero, and to the formula eventually agreed with the PSOE and the Catalans. Martín Villa and Fernández Ordóñez, on the other hand, were apprehensive about the State relinquishing central powers, while the Liberals and Christian Democrats were opposed to the uniformity suggested by Clavero. The meeting was concluded by Arias Salgado (delegated considerable negotiating responsibilities by Suárez, and therefore fairly representative of his views), who laid down five guiding principles of action:

1.º El consenso. 2.º La exigencia del referendum. 3.º Resolver concretamente Cataluña y País Vasco y Galicia? 4.º Racionalizar el Estado descentralizado. 5.º Asegurar sustancialmente el poder del Estado<sup>105</sup>.

From this it emerges that UCD, rather than a coherent model for the reorganisation of the State, aimed to make a deal with the "historical nationalities", within the consensus negotiated with the Socialists, hoping to maintain a strong although less centralised State. In other words, although all the factions were agreed that claims for regional autonomy should be granted, there was not a common programme for the difficult task of reorganising the territorial administration of the State. In the face of the incoherent and even contradictory aims pursued by the factions, the constitutional treatment of the regional question seemed to satisfy the "federalists", such as Clavero, by making autonomy available to all regions, while appeasing the "centralists", by leaving open the possibility of discouraging less historic regions from taking it up<sup>106</sup>. This compromise was opposed by those proposing a separate treatment of the Basques and Catalans, one of whom, a prominent UCD parliamentarian, described it as "una política autonómica disparatada, que consistió en generalizar la situación catalana rebajándola"<sup>107</sup>.

The 8th Title of the Constitution was clearly the result of the consensus between the

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p.77. According to de Blas, this was "un intento de disolver los problemas nacionalistas más graves en una reformulación general de la planta estatal": "El problema nacional-regional español en la transición", in Tezanos, Cotarelo and de Blas, La transición democrática española, Op.cit., pp.587-609 (p.599).

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p.79.

<sup>106</sup> As Clavero has claimed, "para algunos esta posición era simplemente una pura estrategia para sacar adelante la preautonomía de Cataluña, (...) y después yugular el proceso tan pronto se resolvieran los casos del País Vasco y Galicia" (España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., p.35).

<sup>107</sup> Interview C31.

Government, the PSOE and the Catalan nationalists<sup>108</sup>, in which it is difficult to see which UCD faction was able to impose its model. Martín Villa has explained the content of the 8th Title in the following terms:

Atrapada entre los dos fuegos de unos nacionalismos vasco y catalán con planteamientos maximalistas y proclives al ultimátum y de unas izquierdas prestas a emular las exigencias nacionalistas, UCD no tuvo otra opción que la de intentar mantener el tipo supeditándolo todo a la consecución del gran objetivo de aquel momento (...), la Constitución. Así se explica el triunfo de determinadas tesis en el texto constitucional<sup>109</sup>.

This view, which suggests that UCD's position was due more to its role as mediator between other forces than to the synthesis of the proposals from within the party elite, is supported by evidence from Clavero's memoirs. Clavero claims that the UCD leadership only accepted his proposals for a general administrative decentralisation as a tactic to settle the Catalan question<sup>110</sup>. Moreover, he complains that the negotiations over the reestablishment of the Catalan Generalitat bypassed him, as Minister of the Regions, completely, and were conducted instead by Suárez<sup>111</sup>. All this indicates that Suárez had a high degree of control over UCD's constitutional position on the regional question, and that the federalistic elements contained in the constitutional text owed more to the compromises with PSOE and regionalists, necessary to maintain the overriding objective of consensus, than to the pressures from within UCD. Presidential control over UCD's constitutional positions is confirmed by the reports of the negotiations over the Basque problem, in which most sources suggest that Suárez and Fernando Abril conducted the talks alone, without consulting the party<sup>112</sup>.

In conclusion, the constituent process reflects the sources of interdependency inside

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<sup>108</sup> According to the ponente Solé Tura, "refleja con suma claridad todas las tensiones y contradicciones manifestadas en su elaboración" (Nacionalidades y nacionalismos en España, Op.cit., p.107).

<sup>109</sup> Rodolfo Martín Villa, Al servicio del Estado, Barcelona, Planeta, 1984, p.180.

<sup>110</sup> Clavero, España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., p.34.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p.42.

<sup>112</sup> Judgements vary as to the success of this example of presidential intervention; according to one account, Suárez's involvement was crucial in containing Basque nationalist hostility to the constitutional text, and reaching agreement over Basque autonomy: Kepa Bardegarai and Robert Pastor, Estatuto Vasco, San Sebastián, Ediciones Vascas, 1979. A bitterly critical account of Suárez's allegedly obstructive role in the negotiations can be found in Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., pp.148-168. See also de la Cuadra and Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Op.cit., pp.145-157.

UCD in the period 1977-79. The overriding objective common to all the factions within UCD was the passing of a democratic Constitution with the consensus of all democratic political forces, while maintaining the political stability of the State and preventing the rupturista left from controlling the democratisation process. The fact that together these factions amounted to almost a majority of the Congress indicated that by acting cooperatively, this objective could be guaranteed. However, it was clear that Suárez, through his central leadership position and his experience of negotiating with both the opposition and the reactionary sectors of the State, would be in the best position to pursue the interests of the factions and to ensure that the text would be accepted by all the major parties.

The consequences of Suárez's dominant position were that the UCD parliamentary group, representing the different factions, was to an important extent excluded from the real process of negotiation and decision-making surrounding the Constitution. This was also the case on non-constitutional issues, where the Government's lack of interest in Parliament was shown by the use of Decree-Laws to avoid parliamentary debate<sup>113</sup>. The most important parliamentary debates were prepared and controlled by the Government; as Attard reported "en numerosas sesiones los portavoces de UCD tenían que consultar telefónicamente hasta el menor detalle antes de pronunciarse sobre alguna cuestión"<sup>114</sup>. This meant that the position of the UCD parliamentary group was merely a reflection of the position of the Government, in which Suárez and the Partido Popular dominated. Apart from the case of the constitutional provisions for education, where UCD factions were able to call on powerful support from outside the party, the Suárez interpretation of consensus prevailed. This implied consensus with the PSOE, and strengthened the position of those who saw UCD as a reformist party<sup>115</sup>. This was confirmed by PCE leader Carrillo, who declared that "el consenso ha favorecido que el texto de este proyecto sea más progresista de lo que hubiera sido con la pura aritmética parlamentaria"<sup>116</sup>. In any case, it seems evident that the UCD leadership's domination over the conservative minority had favourable consequences for political stability.

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<sup>113</sup> As in the creation of the pre-autonomies, the temporary regional institutions created in 1978; see Alvarez de Miranda, Del contubernio al consenso, Op.cit., p.164. The author, President of the Congress, complained of Suárez's lack of interest in Parliament, and claims to have had little contact with the President (ibid., p.156).

<sup>114</sup> La Constitución por dentro, Op.cit., p.113.

<sup>115</sup> De la Cuadra and Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Op.cit., p.20.

<sup>116</sup> Attard, La Constitución por dentro, Op.cit., p.129.

### 4.3. Policy output and factional conflict

The common aim of the Constitution enabled the UCD leadership to marginalise the factions from party decision-making without jeopardising cooperation. However further down the "hierarchy of objectives" the potential for factional conflict over policy output could immediately be detected. The arrival of the Social Democrats in key economic ministries in the first UCD Government was an early source of friction<sup>117</sup>. Fernández Ordóñez's statement that "estoy dispuesto a que la 'justicia social' sea algo más que un juego de palabras"<sup>118</sup> was clearly intended as a provocation to business sectors and the UCD right. The conflict between the Liberals and Social Democrats over economic policy emerged almost immediately over the signing of the Moncloa Pacts between the major political parties represented in Parliament<sup>119</sup>. The Moncloa Pacts were an attempt to confront Spain's deep economic crisis through a social pact for economic recovery, agreed by political parties in the absence of representative interest groups. This first example of inter-party consensus was a political success for Suárez, but was not fully approved by the Liberals within UCD. Garrigues wrote a newspaper article in which he criticised the concessions made to the Socialists and Communists, particularly the promise of a progressive fiscal reform:

El despilfarro de la Administración Pública española debe ser uno de los más altos de Europa. A mí me parece muy difícil pedir a los ciudadanos españoles que paguen sus impuestos, si no tenemos (...) un mínimo control del gasto público, gasto que representa ya cifras impresionantes. Cuando no existe ese control, el impuesto pierde su razón de ser jurídica y su base moral<sup>120</sup>.

Garrigues also made direct criticisms of the Social Democrats, accusing them of being

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<sup>117</sup> Cambio 16, 292, 17-23 July 1977, p.22.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p.23.

<sup>119</sup> For a summary of the content of the Pacts, see Joaquín Estefanía and Rodolfo Serrano, "Diez años de relaciones industriales en España", in Angel Zaragoza (ed.), Pactos sociales, sindicatos y patronal en España, Madrid, Siglo Veintiuno, 1990, pp.26-29.

<sup>120</sup> "Gobernar no es ceder", ABC, 20 September 1977, reproduced in Un año antes, un año después, Op.cit., p.106.

"nacionalsindicalistas disfrazados con la etiqueta socialdemócrata"<sup>121</sup>. His criticisms were reflected in those of the emerging entrepreneurs' association CEOE (Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales), which warned that it did not feel represented by any of the parties which had signed the Pacts<sup>122</sup>. Fernández Ordóñez complained of pressures from the world of capital in his preparation of the Law of Fiscal Reform<sup>123</sup>, and the leader of the CEOE, Carlos Ferrer, made the following complaint:

Creemos que estamos en nuestro perfecto derecho de exigirle al Gobierno una mayor congruencia con lo que representa. El país, al votarle, eligió un Gobierno de centro y la realidad es que está trabajando con el programa de la izquierda<sup>124</sup>.

Even the Episcopal Conference, fearing the Church's influence over private education could be undermined, launched an offensive against the provisions for increased spending on State schools included in the Pacts<sup>125</sup>.

The Moncloa Pacts revealed that Suárez's support of the Social Democrats faced the opposition of not only the Liberals in UCD, but also vested interests, and particularly business and financial sectors<sup>126</sup>. This was an early indication that basic agreement over the constituent process did not preclude divergence over more specific policy questions. The economic policy represented by the Pacts was accepted - albeit reluctantly - by the UCD right. But in February 1978, the price of this discontent was paid: Suárez was forced into a Cabinet reshuffle in which the economic minister who devised the details of the Pacts, Fuentes Quintana, resigned. The reshuffle necessary to replace Fuentes was generally regarded

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<sup>121</sup> "La fiesta ha terminado", Cambio 16, 297, 15-21 August 1977, reproduced in Un año antes, un año después, Op.cit., p.120.

<sup>122</sup> Cambio 16, 309, 13-19 November 1977, p.12. Cambio 16 went so far as to claim that "los empresarios y, sobre todo la gran finanza están dinamitando el Gobierno" (315, 25-31 December 1977, p.17). Demonstrations were also organised ("Diez mil empresarios, contra la política económica del Gobierno", El País, 29 November 1977, p.1.).

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p.28.

<sup>124</sup> Statement made on 29 November 1977. Quoted in Cambio 16, 318, 15-21 January 1978, p.32.

<sup>125</sup> Cambio 16, 315, 25-31 December 1977, p.10.

<sup>126</sup> Fuentes Quintana later claimed that the implementation of the concessions to the left were postponed by a Government "presionado por las fuerzas de la derecha" ("Todas las preguntas y todas las respuestas sobre los 'Pactos de la Moncloa'", Historia de la transición, Op.cit., p.493).



as a move to ease the fears of big business and the more conservative sectors of UCD<sup>127</sup>. Fuentes resigned as a result of what he called the "falta de control del equipo económico" which made it impossible to carry out the tough anti-inflationary policy followed since his appointment, a policy much criticised by business sectors. The immediate cause of the crisis was the Energy Minister Oliart's proposed National Energy Plan, which divided the economic team into "progressives" and "conservatives", a division which had been present since the formation of the Government<sup>128</sup>. The outcome of the reshuffle (see Table 3.6.) was the removal of three "conservatives" and two "progressives", and their replacement by three close collaborators of the President, and a businessman from outside UCD (later to become one of Suárez's closest advisors). The presence of Rodríguez Sahagún was interpreted as an attempt to integrate the increasingly hostile CEOE into the economic strategy of the Government.

The new cabinet did not represent a shift in the balance between the UCD factions, but to the extent that Suárez's Vice-President for Economic Affairs could not be retained when under pressure from the right both within and outside UCD, the reshuffle showed the limits of Suárez's control over his own Government, and the relative strength of the UCD right, particularly when backed by extra-parliamentary interests<sup>129</sup>. Moreover the weakness of the UCD's parliamentary position was demonstrated by the Government's first defeat in the Congress, in its explanation of the Cabinet reshuffle<sup>130</sup>. In the short term this reshuffle did not undermine the President's position: the promotion of Fernando Abril, a close friend and collaborator of Suárez, to Vice-President in charge of economic affairs, indicated a further concentration of power around the President. But events like the formation of two Governments and the reactions to the Moncloa pacts suggest that, further down the hierarchy of objectives of the UCD coalition, the potential for conflict was high, and indeed the appearance of conflicting interests and objectives emerged very quickly over economic policy.

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<sup>127</sup> For example see "Crisis de Gobierno: Suárez gira a la derecha", El País, 25 February 1978, p.1.

<sup>128</sup> "Suárez mediará en el enfrentamiento del equipo económico", El País, 15 February 1978. The "progressives" were Fuentes, Fernández Ordóñez and García Díez, the "conservatives" Oliart, Garrigues, Lladó and Martínez Genique.

<sup>129</sup> The Cambio 16 Editorial described Fuentes as having been "derribado por una fuerte ola de la derecha descontenta del rumbo que llevaba la economía del país. (...) Ha querido enfrentarse con las poderosas industrias eléctricas (...) y ha deseado aplicar un plan quirúrgico que ha chocado inevitablemente con el sector más conservador de la UCD" (326, 5-11 March 1978, p.19).

<sup>130</sup> "Primera derrota del Gobierno Suárez en el Parlamento", El País, 1 March 1978, p.1.

The UCD coalition was only a limited restraint on Suárez's ability to choose his own Government in the 1977-79 period, which indicates that his central position in the political power game was maintained to a considerable extent. But the emergence of an ideological clash between left and right was a threat to the consolidation of inter-faction cooperation. The distribution of acceptable collective incentives to the party factions was dependent on the existence of some common objectives, and it was not clear to what extent such objectives could be agreed after the constituent period. Such doubts were magnified by the support for the UCD right from powerful interest groups, which could exacerbate disagreement, as well as threatening the leadership's control over the party factions.

## **5. Conclusions**

The internal dynamics of the UCD elite during the constituent period were very much conditioned by the prolonging of President Suárez's exceptionally powerful leadership position. The concentration of electoral and organisational resources around him, made clear during the UCD's formation, emphasised the dependency of the coalitional groups on him for their parliamentary representation. The continuing pivotal position held by Suárez in the political system made his Presidency an indispensable element in the achievement of a democratic Constitution through consensus between political forces. This balance of power enabled Suárez and his closest allies to control the governmental process without consulting the coalitional groups present in Parliament, or often even the ministers representing them in the Cabinet. Moreover the party management style followed, though it sought to integrate the coalitional groups into the party structures, conspicuously avoided consociational or coalitional methods of regulating internal party affairs.

This would appear to support the view that centralisation of control over resources within an organisation promotes interdependency of the component parts, and consequently internal coherence. However, an important element in the interdependency created within UCD in the period 1977-79 was the convergence of the short-term political objectives of all organisational actors around the achievement of a democratic Constitution. Therefore Suárez's central leadership position promoted organisational coherence because it was a key factor in achieving that shared objective, thus providing a flow of collective benefits to the party factions. This did not, however, succeed in establishing lasting commitments, either internally

or externally. The next Chapter examines how Suárez exploited his dominant position in the constituent process to establish a unitary party with wide presidential powers, in a bid to provide his situational charisma with more durable foundations.



## **CHAPTER 4: FROM COALITION TO PARTY: THE PRESIDENTIAL MODEL OF PARTY DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Introduction**

The previous Chapter has shown how the parliamentary cohesion of UCD depended to a large extent on agreement over the constitutional project and the leadership required to carry it through. At the same time it has suggested that agreement over common objectives only went so far, suggesting the need for flexible organisational formulae allowing the sub-groups influence over policy definition. However, the organisational model which dominated the creation of UCD as a unified party reflected its creation as the political vehicle of Suárez and his reformist Government. The development of UCD was essentially an attempt to overcome the elements of diffusion and sub-group autonomy present in the genetic model through the formalisation of governmental domination and leadership autonomy. The new unitary party was strongly presidential, but left the CD barons' parliamentary power bases intact. This was a source of future conflict, but the gravity of this conflict was also due to the structural characteristics of the unitary party. In particular, the party was conceived as an "electoral machine", whose representative function was neglected in favour of a pure catch-all strategy dependent on Suárez's popularity. Moreover, the centralisation of organisational authority was reflected in the failure to formalise any party involvement in government decision-making. In this chapter it is argued that this organisational strategy laid the foundations for internal conflict by making the party excessively dependent on the situational (and therefore temporary) charisma of Adolfo Suárez.

### **2. The unitary party of UCD: A presidential model of party management**

#### **2.1. The dissolution of the taxi-parties**

The process of unification of UCD gives some confirmation of the dominant position of the Presidency in the initial phase of the party's existence. The document of Parliamentary Union signed immediately after the elections envisaged the unification of the coalitional parties in a single organisation, in order to respond to the requirements of the new democracy:

Difícilmente podemos competir con partidos unitarios (...) como el PSOE y el PCE o con los partidos nacionalistas o con AP, si continuamos como un conglomerado "variopinto" que se apoya sólo en el ejercicio del poder resultante de las elecciones<sup>1</sup>.

The creation of a unitary party denied the different factions any formal autonomy in their political action, and as a result met some resistance. At first, the coalitional parties, particularly the Christian Democrats, insisted that the dissolution of their parties could only take place after the first party congress, on the basis of an acceptable ideological document which guaranteed respect for their political principles. The PDC also insisted that its acceptance of the unitary party was conditional on the inclusion in UCD's ideological document of the demands of the Church over the constitutional treatment of divorce, abortion and private schools<sup>2</sup>. Further opposition came from the FSD of Lasuén, who also recognised the strength of Suárez's position:

Suárez piensa que tiene una responsabilidad histórica importante, que es la de hacer la Constitución, y que sabe que el triunfo de UCD se debió en gran medida a su presencia al frente de la candidatura, y que, de lo contrario, no se hubieran ganado las elecciones. Se siente, por tanto, moralmente justificado en utilizar UCD para garantizar la llegada a buen puerto de la Constitución<sup>3</sup>.

This demonstrates the extent to which the concentration of powers around the President was perceived as linked to the constituent period, and therefore difficult for the barons to contest. Moreover, important factions were favourable to unification. The Partido Popular had long pressed for a broad-based party of the Centre including different ideological tendencies. The Tácito José Luis Álvarez pointed out that the UCD factions had only achieved parliamentary representation as a result of standing together in the elections, adding that "los que con las mismas etiquetas han quedado, por su voluntad, separados, no han sido elegidos ni uno solo"<sup>4</sup>. The Liberals of Garrigues were also in favour:

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Iñigo Caverio, "La militancia de UCD", in Historia de la transición, Op.cit., p.506.

<sup>2</sup> "El Partido Demócrata Cristiano aplaza su posible disolución", El País, 1 December 1977, p.12.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with José Ramón Lasuén, Cambio 16, N.336, 14-20 May 1978, p.22.

<sup>4</sup> Álvarez, "Razones para una unión", Informaciones, 2 July 1977, in España desde el centro, Op.cit., pp.167-171.

Todos los grandes partidos del mundo son unitarios. No creo que seamos capaces de construir una opción de centro consistente frente a otras alternativas de Poder, sino siempre y cuando sea a base de un único partido<sup>5</sup>.

The assent of the PSD (two of whose deputies, Moya and Arias Salgado, were to have important responsibilities in the organisation of the unitary party<sup>6</sup>) left the opponents of unification isolated. The UCD Political Council approved the dissolution of the coalitional parties with the vote against of Ignacio Camuñas of the PDP, and the abstention of Alvarez de Miranda for the PDC<sup>7</sup>. The PDC's position was weakened by its failure to achieve a unitary political action on the part of all Christian Democrats (the EDC of Gil-Robles refused to collaborate with UCD), and, in particular, by the conspicuous electoral failure of those centre groups such as the EDC which had fought the elections alone. An article written by EDC leader Jaime Cortezo, advocating the dissolution of the PDC and the integration of Christian Democrats in UCD, made it clear that UCD was the only serious political option for Christian Democrats:

La realidad es que el 15 de junio las personas de la coalición UCD nos derrotaron por una abrumadora mayoría, circunstancia de decisivo peso para los que somos demócratas, pues fue el electorado el que pronunció ese veredicto. (...) Ahora bien, ante un futuro que nos fuerza a partidos de masas, creo que es el lugar más adecuado para aportar nuestros esfuerzos<sup>8</sup>.

The lack of alternatives meant that Christian Democrats were dependent on other groups, including the Suárez Government, for the achievement of their political objectives.

Another reason for the weakness of those opposing the unitary party was that the coalitional parties were organisationally fragile, and there was little evidence of their being any more representative of the UCD electorate than the Suárez Government. The 15 coalitional parties brought no more than 2000 members between them, most of them affiliated

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<sup>5</sup> Joaquín Garrigues Walker, "No se puede seguir trampeando", ABC, 20 October 1977, in Un año antes un año después, Op.cit., p.129.

<sup>6</sup> According to Fernández Ordóñez, Suárez offered guarantees that the unitary party would not lean to the right, and that the minority position of the Social Democrats would be respected (La España necesaria, Op.cit., p.79).

<sup>7</sup> "En ocho días deberán disolverse los partidos integrantes de UCD", El País, 3 December 1977, p.7.

<sup>8</sup> Jaime Cortezo, "Acerca de los defectos de UCD", El País, 10 December 1977, p.7.

to the Partido Popular, the party closest to the Government<sup>9</sup>. The Social Democrats were a group of high-ranking functionaries, with no provincial or local presence, the Liberals of the PDP and the FDLP had around 400 activists in the whole of Spain, and the PDC no more than 600 (although the Christian Democrat faction gained strength with the incorporation of many EDC activists after the elections)<sup>10</sup>. On the other hand, by far the best organised group were the Independents, who did not recognise themselves as an ideological "family", and pushed for unification:

El sector que venía del régimen anterior era un sector que se apiñó a la gente en torno a los Gobiernos Civiles, ocupaban más parcelas de poder que nadie a nivel provincial, porque ocupaban muchas posiciones como delegados provinciales, de ministerios; las delegaciones provinciales de los ministerios eran una red de poder, tenían presupuestos, controlaban inversiones estatales en los pueblos<sup>11</sup>.

This group had a key role in establishing the UCD provincial organisation, and responded to Suárez and Martín Villa's leadership. These organisational resources meant that the bulk of party decision-making power was concentrated around the Independents who dominated the Government. The majority view was that unity of action was necessary if UCD was to acquire an adequate organisational basis to compete electorally in the future, without the help of the State apparatus. This is confirmed by the fact that within the PDC, a considerable sector was in favour of the dissolution<sup>12</sup>, and in the PDP, only its leader Camuñas, sacked by Suárez as Minister for Relations with the Cortes, voted against it<sup>13</sup>. Suárez added extra pressure by suggesting that failure to unify would put democratisation in danger by destabilising the constituent process<sup>14</sup>. In this way, the President took advantage of his indispensable role in the transition to impose his will in the development of the unitary party.

The imposition of party unification was a reflection of the strength of Suárez's

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<sup>9</sup> Iñigo Cavero, "La militancia de UCD", in Historia de la transición, Op.cit., p.506.

<sup>10</sup> Interviews with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992, and Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>12</sup> See the interview with Alvarez de Miranda, "No hemos pedido a Suárez puestos en el Gobierno", El País, 7 December 1977, p.13.

<sup>13</sup> "Los partidos de UCD no tienen prisa por disolverse", El País, 8 December 1977, p.9.

<sup>14</sup> Alvarez de Miranda, Del contubernio al consenso, Op.cit., p.143.



position, as the PDC and other opponents were unable to set the conditions for their integration in the unitary party. The demands of support for the Church's constitutional positions, and of a UCD Congress to agree unification, were rejected, indicating that the opponents of party unity had insufficient political resources to prevent Suárez getting his own way. However the decision created a degree of discontent within the UCD elite, reflected in the failure of the parties to dissolve before the stipulated deadline. In particular, Alvarez de Miranda warned that "si UCD no respeta la ideología democristiana, nos iremos"<sup>15</sup>. In other words, whilst Suárez's control over political resources in the constituent period allowed him to run UCD on his terms, the coalitional parties would be only prepared to accept his leadership while he was pursuing objectives compatible with theirs. As Martín Villa has claimed, "en la realidad, las llamadas familias siguieron unidas y haciendo la guerra por su cuenta"<sup>16</sup>: the dissolution of the coalitional parties represented an artificial unity, which lacked a solid basis of ideological or programmatic cohesion. As a result, organisational maintenance would continue to depend to some extent on the distribution of office and policy payoffs to the different factions, although not on systematic, coalitional lines.

## 2.2. The 1st UCD Congress: The formalisation of a transitory charisma

Until the first party congress, UCD was in effect a government and a parliamentary group, in which the heterogeneity of the taxi-parties was evident. The creation of a concrete party organisation during 1978 provided the opportunity to reduce the importance of the factional divisions within the UCD parliamentary elite. The degree to which this process was conditioned by governmental or presidential intervention - penetration from the centre - was fundamental to the success of this operation. In an attempt to promote a more cohesive, if not homogeneous party, the creation of an organisational infrastructure leading up to the 1st National Congress was a highly centralised process.

Presidential control of the organisational development of the party was exercised through the General Secretariat of UCD, which until the 1st Congress was an unelected body. The role of party coordinator was initially occupied by individuals close to Suárez: first

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<sup>15</sup> "Los partidos integrados en UCD se disuelven sin grandes dificultades", El País, 13 December 1977, p.9.

<sup>16</sup> Martín Villa, Al servicio del Estado, Op.cit., p.83.

Salvador Sánchez Terán of the PP, then Fernando Abril, and finally Rafael Arias Salgado of the PSD. Centralised control over the process of party creation manifested itself in the conspicuous role of Government ministers. As one member of the Secretariat recalls:

El partido estaba en el Gobierno, y entonces lo que realmente tenía importancia era el Gobierno. En la organización del partido como tal, en la misma labor de implantación del partido, en determinadas zonas, el partido estaba muy pendiente de los compromisos que adquiría el Gobierno<sup>17</sup>.

This is confirmed in cruder terms by a prominent minister: "UCD desde el punto de vista organizativo fue evidentemente un partido organizado desde el Gobierno para ser el brazo político del Gobierno"<sup>18</sup>. The campaign "UCD, en marcha", launched in early 1978 to emphasise an UCD presence in the provinces, was dominated by members of the Government and national party figures, with local party officials and even parliamentarians relegated to a supporting role<sup>19</sup>.

Until the 1st Congress, the party had no real presence as the organisational support of the Government; as Martín Villa recognises "los órganos del partido eran por aquellos tiempos casi en exclusividad los Grupos Parlamentarios del Congreso y del Senado"<sup>20</sup>. The UCD Executive Committee until the Congress was composed of the Secretariat, the ministers who were parliamentarians and the spokesmen of the two parliamentary groups. The fact that the Executive Committee was not an elected body, but instead the result of informal negotiations among the barons, meant that the UCD had no legitimate organ through which to exercise party control over government. Moreover the dominant presence of Government ministers implied that the Executive Committee was little more than a representation of the Council of

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<sup>17</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Martín Villa, September 1993.

<sup>19</sup> For example, Minister Garrigues (deputy for Madrid) took the campaign to Ciudad Real, Minister Caverio (deputy for Madrid) appeared in Cuenca, and Ignacio Camuñas (deputy for Madrid and ex-Minister for Relations with the Cortes) went to Valladolid ("Garrigues: 'Estamos gobernando al mismo tiempo que reconstruimos el Estado'", El País, 26 February 1978, p.12; "Iñigo Caverio: 'No hay discrepancias en UCD'", El País, 28 February 1978, p.14.).

<sup>20</sup> Martín Villa, Al servicio del Estado, Op.cit., p.83.

Ministers, and confirmed that the real decision-making process in UCD took place there<sup>21</sup>, without the interference of the party. As Arias Salgado has explained, "el partido funcionaba como maquinaria - el comité ejecutivo no tenía capacidad de decisión - y el foro de debate era el Consejo de Ministros"<sup>22</sup>. This allowed Suárez to share decision-making with ministers whom he himself had chosen, rather than an Executive with a more proportional representation of the factions.

The need to keep the parliamentary group under tight governmental control during the constituent process meant the 1st UCD Congress was postponed as long as possible, leading to tensions and complaints of lack of internal democracy. By May 1978, the constituent process was nearing its end, and the prospect of new elections after the passing of the Constitution made the development of a party organisation more urgent. The preparation for a Party Congress began with the appointment by Suárez of a new Executive Committee, which included a revitalised Secretariat, with greater political backing, under the control of Rafael Arias Salgado<sup>23</sup>. This Secretariat reflected the strength of the groups closest to Suárez: three PP, two PSD (including the coordinator), two Independents and three Christian Democrats. The Independents Núñez (close to Martín Villa) and Viana occupied key positions: Electoral action, which included the responsibility for electoral strategy, and Civic Organisations, which controlled the relations of UCD with extra-party organisations, allowing Suárez to block the integration of powerful groups which could challenge his control over the party machinery. This was to become a central issue in the organisational debate, as will be shown later. The new Executive Committee and the appointment of Arias Salgado strengthened the position of the groups, particularly the Social Democrats, which favoured a definition of UCD as a Centre-left party, competing with the PSOE for the progressive centre vote. The position of the Secretary General was that "la circunstancia española no daba para un partido conservador mayoritario y que ganara las elecciones, y por tanto no podía perder

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<sup>21</sup> For instance, the decision to dissolve Parliament in 1978 was taken by the Council of Ministers, not by the UCD Executive Committee (Pedro J. Ramírez, Así se ganaron las elecciones, Madrid, Prensa Española, 1979, p.19).

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>23</sup> "UCD quiere 'dinamizar' la preparación de su primer congreso", El País, 4 May 1978.

nunca UCD esa connotación centrista y reformista"<sup>24</sup>. This strategy may have been the price the more "exit-prone" Social Democrats (some on good terms with the PSOE leadership) demanded for their loyalty to UCD. It also responded to the electoral reality analysed in the previous Chapter. The organisational consequences of this strategy were that UCD would acquire a presidentialist structure in order to compete with the PSOE in terms of organisational coherence and effectiveness<sup>25</sup>. This meant abandoning the unwieldy structure of the coalition and imposing unity around the prestige of the President, who would assume wide powers within the party.

The preparation of the 1st Congress was closely controlled by the UCD leadership. After meeting the UCD Provincial Secretaries to explain how delegates were to be elected, Arias Salgado distributed a communiqué forbidding any public statements by party members about internal disputes, under the threat of disciplinary measures<sup>26</sup>. In a similar way to the "UCD en marcha" campaign, ministers supervised the Provincial Assemblies in which delegates to the Congress were elected, and many were also attended by Arias Salgado. The extent to which this reflected a central control over the development of the party is shown by the fact that the ministers often had no apparent link with these provinces: Lavilla (a Catalan, Senator by Royal Appointment) went to Cádiz and Badajoz, Cabanillas (Gallego, deputy for Orense) went to Granada, Fernández Ordóñez (deputy for Madrid) went to Málaga, Vitoria, Valladolid and Tenerife, and Calvo Ortega (senator for Segovia) went to Tarragona, Logroño, Zamora and Santander<sup>27</sup>. The aim of this control appears to have been to avoid conflicts between factions at provincial level through the authoritative presence of senior governmental figures, as part of the general objective of eliminating factional conflict.

This objective was the principal reason for the central control of the development of a party organisation, as shown by the explicit statements of Arias Salgado: "Después del

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<sup>24</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992. A similar position was presented by Arturo Moya in "La hora de un gran partido", a speech made on 20 March 1978, reproduced in Constitución, economía y regiones, Madrid, Club Siglo XXI, 1978, pp.473-487.

<sup>25</sup> Statements by sources close to the UCD leadership; "Noventa cargos en disputa en el I Congreso de UCD", El País, 7 October 1978, p.12.

<sup>26</sup> "UCD intenta dar uniformidad al partido ante una precampaña electoral", El País, 29 July 1978, p.9.

<sup>27</sup> El País, 1 and 22 August 1978, 2 September 1978; Huneus, Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.214.

Congreso sólo quedará una tendencia política en UCD"<sup>28</sup>. This implied suppressing factional conflict through the imposition of governmental, and particularly presidential authority, legitimated through a party Congress which would establish a presidentialist model of party organisation. This model was imposed in the preparations for the Congress and in the election of the delegates. The Provincial Assemblies involved voting closed lists of delegates, in which the winning list was given 75% of the delegates for that province, and the second-placed list 25%. Since the winning lists were usually led by individuals favourable to Suárez's unitary pretensions, this strengthened the hand of the President at the Congress, by over-representing his supporters<sup>29</sup>. The Presidency of the Congress, initially offered to Emilio Attard of the conservative tendency of the PP, was instead left to Pérez Llorca, also of the PP, but much closer to the President. The ponencias which would be voted as draft documents of UCD Government policy were prepared within the State administration under the supervision of the appropriate ministers<sup>30</sup>. The Chairmen and participants in the Commissions discussing UCD policy were appointed by the (unelected) Executive Committee. As a result of this, the key Juridical Commission which drew up the ponencia for the party statutes was chaired by Santiago Rodríguez-Miranda, a Social Democrat close to Suárez.

This organisational strategy was an attempt to overcome the factional origins of UCD. As already mentioned, the Centro Democrático parties were little more than groups of friends, with no infrastructure and few activists. They dominated the parliamentary group, but did not have a corresponding power base outside it. Arias Salgado's aim was to promote a party membership unrelated to factional struggles:

Es evidente que UCD tiene su origen en una coalición de pequeños partidos y que ese origen pesa a la hora de formar orgánicamente un partido. Pero ése es un problema de Madrid (...). De nuestros militantes en provincias, el 99% no tienen ni idea de lo que son las etiquetas de origen. (...) La gente se siente identificada con y por UCD, y nada más<sup>31</sup>.

This non-factional membership, in part controlled provincially by Martín Villa through the

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<sup>28</sup> El País, 17 October 1978.

<sup>29</sup> Interview C36.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>31</sup> Interview in Cambio 16, 338, 28 May-3 June 1978, p.46.

Civil Governors<sup>32</sup>, was to be the basis of the presidentialist structure of the party. Since Suárez at that time was the undisputed leader of UCD, his uncontested election as UCD President by the party Congress was never in doubt<sup>33</sup>. The presidentialist structure could be defended by Arias Salgado as the expression of two organisational principles: "máxima democracia en la elección de presidente; y amplias atribuciones y plena capacidad de decisión presidencial sujetas a control y responsabilidad política"<sup>34</sup>. However, given the impossibility of challenging Suárez's leadership at the time of the Congress, the delegates were in effect being asked to legitimate the dominant position of the President in the decision-making procedure of the party. This was necessary to reinforce his position in the Presidency of UCD, which was until then based only on the support of a parliamentary group dominated by the factions<sup>35</sup>.

The most important events of the Congress for the organisation of the unitary party were the statutes drawn up by the Juridical Commission, and the elections to directive posts in the party, carried out according to the procedures established by these statutes<sup>36</sup>. The statutes emphatically rejected any attempt to maintain UCD as an electoral coalition, or even as a unitary party with factional organisation; Article 12.3 stated that "no se permitirá la existencia de grupos o fracciones organizadas dentro de Unión de Centro Democrático"<sup>37</sup>. Considering that a little more than a year earlier UCD had consisted of a number of autonomous groups officially registered as political parties, this measure was a radical step. The principal governing bodies of the party were the Political Council, the permanent representative of the party Congress, and the Executive Committee, charged with executing

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<sup>32</sup> According to Oscar Alzaga; interview, May 1992.

<sup>33</sup> An opinion poll for Cambio 16, whilst putting UCD behind the PSOE at 12.2% to 21.4%, showed Suárez to be the most popular leader (19.9% compared to 14.2% for Felipe González): Cambio 16, 354, 17-23 September 1978, p.31.

<sup>34</sup> "Un partido interclasista con vocación mayoritaria", El País, 18 October 1978, p.14.

<sup>35</sup> The factions were well aware of this situation. For example, during the dispute over the pre-autonomy of the Canary Islands, the Liberal Juan Cambreleng warned that "Suárez no puede gobernar sin el grupo de parlamentarios liberales"(Cambio 16, 334, 30 April-6 May 1978, p.33).

<sup>36</sup> These statutes were drawn up by Arias Salgado and the Christian Democrat Antonio Vázquez. According to the former, the principal inspiration of the document were the statutes of the Italian and Belgian Christian Democratic parties (Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992).

<sup>37</sup> The statutes are published in UCD, La solución a un reto, Madrid, Unión Editorial, 1978, pp.363-392.

the policies determined by the Congress and the Political Council<sup>38</sup>. Both organs were chaired by the President of the party and the Secretary General, who between them enjoyed a wide range of powers. The President "mantiene, en representación del Partido, las relaciones con el Gobierno, preside los Grupos Parlamentarios de UCD y promueve y coordina con carácter general la actividad política y organizativa del Partido, con plenas facultades ejecutivas"<sup>39</sup>. This gave the party leader, in theory, broad control over the governmental and parliamentary behaviour of the party. Of particular importance was the provision that the President "decide en las cuestiones electorales", which would allow him to exercise control over candidates presented in elections, and therefore in practice choose the elected representatives of the party<sup>40</sup>. The President could also constitute a Permanent Commission (a kind of kitchen cabinet) inside the Executive Committee<sup>41</sup>, to make decision-making even more efficient, if not more democratic.

A further arm of presidential power was the Secretary General. The Secretary General executed the decisions of Political Council and Executive Committee by delegation of the President, and had a number of specific responsibilities which reaffirmed the dominance of the President:

Ejecutar los acuerdos del Comité Ejecutivo; Coordinar las relaciones entre el Partido y el Gobierno y entre el Partido y los Grupos Parlamentarios del mismo; Dirigir la acción de las Secretarías Ejecutivas; Coordinar la acción de los Comités Regionales y Provinciales; Ostentar, por delegación expresa del presidente, la representación del Partido y mantener las relaciones con otros Partidos Políticos y presidir, si asistiese a ellas, las reuniones de los órganos de los Grupos Parlamentarios de UCD en el Congreso y en el Senado<sup>42</sup>.

Moreover the Secretary General was not elected by the party Congress, but by the Political Council, amongst candidates chosen by the President from the members of the Executive Committee. These aspects of the party statutes tended to confirm that the independence of the UCD parliamentary groups would be subordinated to presidential power (exercised through

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., Articles 17-20 and 23-25.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Article 21.2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Article 21.1; on this point see Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.231-232.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Article 24.2.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Article 26.2.

the Secretary General), and that the sources of power in the party would be highly centralised - an "estructura piramidal" in the words of an ex-minister<sup>43</sup>.

Just as important as the competences of the various party organs was the way in which they were elected. Apart from the Political Council, which was elected on proportional criteria, the basic approach, as in the election of the delegates, was majoritarian. First of all, the Presidency's assumption of wide powers meant that it was difficult for the party leadership to reflect the position of minorities inside the party. Secondly the Executive Committee was elected through closed lists, which in reality meant that the President, representing the majority position in the party, could compose the Executive to his taste on the "winner takes all" principle. These provisions were contested from the beginning by Christian Democrats in UCD, who proposed "diluting" presidential power through the election of Vice-Presidents, and the election of the Executive through a system of proportional representation. These amendments were rejected (by the Social Democrat President of the Juridical Commission) on procedural grounds<sup>44</sup>, raising accusations of the results of the Congress being "fixed" by the UCD leadership.

The tight control over the proceedings of the Congress, and the consolidation and legitimisation of presidential domination which resulted from it, make the creation of the UCD party organisation a clear example of penetration directed from the Presidency, reflecting the centralisation of political resources around the figure of Adolfo Suárez. He was able to impose a set of statutes giving him wide powers, and elect an Executive Committee, and a Secretary General, without the inconvenience of a rival list. However, the extent of Suárez's domination should not be exaggerated, since he was obliged to integrate representatives of the more conservative factions into his Executive Committee in order to avoid the risk of a rival list which could give the measure of his opponents' support amongst the party membership. Table 4.1. demonstrates that the UCD factions all received a quota of the Executive Committee which represented their strength in Parliament (with the exception of the regionalists). Importantly, all the members of the Government, except the Minister of Defence, who was not a UCD member, were included, as were the Presidents of the two

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Iñigo Caverio, July 1992.

<sup>44</sup> "Rechazadas las enmiendas demócrata-cristianas a la ponencia de estatutos", El País, 20 October 1978, p.12.



Chambers and the two parliamentary groups, and the members of the UCD Secretariat. The official list for the Executive Committee was only completed after prolonged negotiations among the party barons, in which an agreement was reached to increase the size of the Executive Committee (from 30 to 35) in order to integrate representatives of the factions<sup>45</sup>. While Suárez had a majority of delegates which would vote for his statutes and his Executive Committee, the large minority of Christian Democrats and Liberals had to be appeased, since the aim of the Congress was to demonstrate UCD's cohesion. The presentation of single lists to be voted by acclamation was part of this strategy, and the conservative factions had to be coopted by offering them a representation in keeping with their parliamentary strength. Another concession made was to introduce a clause stating that the Executive had to operate in the framework of the decisions of the Political Council, which was elected by a form of proportional representation<sup>46</sup>.

Despite these concessions, the 1st UCD Congress is an extreme example of centralised control, and the imposition of Government on Party and on parliamentary group. Understandably this provoked a degree of discontent, in particular on the part of the Christian Democrats, the faction least close to the President. Since there were no rival lists in the votes for the different governing bodies of the party, dissent was expressed through abstention or blank voting. The show of unity was spoilt by the high number of delegates who refused to legitimate the official list for the Executive with their votes: 505 out of 1585. An even greater number (548) refused to vote for the Political Council, even though it was proportionally elected; this apparently represented the discontent of some provincial delegates (particularly those of Almería, who abstained en bloc) at the disparity between provincial membership and representation on the Council.

However the vote for the Presidency reflected the strength of Suárez's leadership amongst the party membership: out of 1589 votes, 1460 voted in favour, and only 129 voted blank<sup>47</sup>. This showed that the presidentialist strategy was effective, in that the dominance of the party decision-making processes by the Presidency now had a legitimation from the

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<sup>45</sup> "Pugna de los distintos sectores para formar parte de la ejecutiva de UCD", El País, 21 October 1978, p.1 and p.9.

<sup>46</sup> Article 23.1, in UCD statutes, La solución a un reto, Op.cit.

<sup>47</sup> "La elección de los comités ejecutivo y político registró un tercio de votos en blanco", El País, 22 October 1978, p.10.

"grass roots", which strengthened Suárez's hand in his relationship with the UCD barons. Moreover, the organisational structure established by the ponencia for the party statutes was passed by the Congress with only 38 votes against and 27 abstentions, demonstrating a basic consensus over the presidentialist model adopted<sup>48</sup>. Dissidence was expressed by a group led by the Christian Democrat of the PP Díaz-Ambrona, who complained about the rigid presidential control and absence of debate in the Congress. The discontent expressed in the vote for the Executive was more a protest against the undemocratic nature of the Congress, in that the party leadership had prepared the Congress as a demonstration of unity, suppressing any criticism of the way in which the organisation was run. For example, an attempt to present a rival list of candidates for the Executive was blocked on procedural grounds by the President Pérez-Llorca, leaving blank votes as the only alternative to a plebiscitary approval of the presidential list.

However the presidentialist structure did enjoy the support of the Liberal faction led by Garrigues:

En cuanto a la estructura de la UCD, particularmente me inclino por que sea un partido presidencialista. Trasladar a la organización de un partido político la vida parlamentaria sería un error gravísimo. En un partido, como en definitiva en un país, alguien tiene que mandar. Ahora bien, la forma de alcanzar el Poder y la forma de perderlo y los límites de su ejercicio deben estar lo suficientemente institucionalizados de tal suerte que no exista el riesgo de que se convierta en un poder dictatorial<sup>49</sup>.

It seems that Garrigues regarded himself as the likely successor to Suárez, so this position is understandable. But the inability of the factional leaders to organise a united front in opposition to these developments left them exposed, as a new organisational front was opened on terms exclusively favourable to the President. In the words of one observer,

tras su incapacidad para orquestar una iniciativa conjunta en el marco del Congreso centrista, las antiguas grandes familias ideológicas de la oposición moderada quedarían convertidas en simples camarillas testimoniales, siempre

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<sup>48</sup> "Aprobado el proyecto de Estatutos", El País, 21 October 1978, p.9. This ponencia was the only one not to be passed unanimously.

<sup>49</sup> "No se puede seguir trampeando", ABC, 20 September 1977, reproduced in Un año antes, un año después, Op.cit., p.130.

dependientes del grado de favor de que gozaran sus líderes ante el presidente Suárez<sup>50</sup>.

Divisions amongst the party barons left Suárez as the undisputed leader of the party, with a presidentialist structure which allowed him to direct the expansion of the party from above, maintaining the centralisation of organisational power around his leadership.

This process of expansion by penetration - which I will refer to as presidentialisation - had as its aim the elimination of the coalitional origins of UCD by making the party leader the principal source of authority within the organisation. Leadership autonomy enabled Suárez to negotiate the transition with other political forces from a position of great flexibility. Within the party, leadership autonomy meant that the distribution of organisational benefits and incentives to the party membership, from the elite to the grass-roots, would be controlled by the President himself, without the mediation of the factional leaders. As far as selective incentives were concerned, this was easily achieved: the majoritarian logic of elections to party office, responsibility for governmental appointments through the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, and presidential intervention over the electoral lists, gave Suárez ultimate control over the distribution of power positions. The presidentialisation of the distribution of collective incentives - the benefits resulting from Government policy - implied that Suárez should assume control over the definition of policy objectives, abandoning the coalitional style of bargaining between ideological families. A fundamental part of this strategy was the elaboration of an ideological synthesis capable of overcoming the original heterogeneity of the UCD coalition.

### 2.3. The definition of organisational objectives: Ideological confusion

The aim of establishing a common ideological identity was not as impossible as some observers have suggested<sup>51</sup>. Rather than the multiple identities of Liberals, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, Independents and regionalists, the real division within UCD was between left and right, as in most parties (although the question of the autonomies cut across

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<sup>50</sup> Pedro J. Ramírez, Así se ganaron las elecciones 1979, Op.cit., p.69.

<sup>51</sup> As Mario Caciagli rightly points out, "no era un fenómeno anormal el que socialdemócratas y reformistas conviviesen con liberales y católicos conservadores"; such a range of ideological options is common in political parties, particularly those of the right (Elecciones y partidos en la transición española, Op.cit., p.275).

this division). In this case, the UCD left pushed for progressive "reformism", according to the logic of electoral competition, whilst the right preferred a clearer defence of conservative interests - the logic of constituency representation. A similar dialectic emerged in the PSOE, provoking a bitter conflict between Marxist "purists" (in favour of constituency representation) and Social Democrats arguing for centre-oriented electoral competition with UCD.

In UCD, this dynamic was already visible in the ideological and strategic debate emerging from the Moncloa Pacts and the constituent process. Although the party Congress left little room for statements on political strategy, the view of the UCD right was expressed by ex-Tácito José Luis Alvarez in his speech as Mayor of Madrid. Alvarez made a speech widely reported as very conservative, in which he claimed that the centre alone had brought democracy, without any help from the left-wing parties who formed the *Platajunta*<sup>52</sup>. This was an implicit criticism of members of UCD who had been involved in the *Platajunta*, such as Fernández Ordóñez, but also of the concessions made to the PSOE during the constituent process. The applause which this speech received suggested this was a view widely shared in the party.

This tension was reflected in the ideological debate which took place in the months preceding the party Congress. The first Documento ideológico de UCD was drawn up at the end of 1977 by an Ideological Committee formed by the Liberal Fontán, the Christian Democrat Cavero, the Tácito Alvarez, the regionalist Clavero, the Social Democrat Arias Salgado, and the Independents Calvo Sotelo, Mayor Zaragoza and Fraile. The stated objective of this document was to achieve a synthesis of the ideological positions of the component groups of UCD<sup>53</sup>. However, the result was an accumulation rather than a synthesis of ideologies, and did not seem to offer a clarification of UCD's political direction:

Esta ideología política, democrática y de centro (...) se inspira en los principios de la solidaridad popular e interclasista apuntados desde fines del siglo XIX por las corrientes democrático-cristianas, que hoy asumen la noción de libertad, en el sentido liberal de la palabra, y que se enriquecen con el espíritu humanista de la ética cristiana. Y, por último, incorpora las técnicas económicas y sociales de intervención de los Poderes públicos, propias de la corriente social-demócrata<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup> "José Luis Alvarez: Sólo los centristas trajeron la democracia", El País, 20 October 1978, p.12.

<sup>53</sup> UCD Secretaría de Programación, Documento ideológico de UCD, Madrid, 1978, p.2.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.12-13.

As a result of the reshuffle of the Secretariat in May 1978, a new ideological document (to be presented to the party Congress) was drafted, under the direction of Secretary of Training Luis Gámir, originally of the PSD. Part of this document was published in El País, and marks an important distinction with the first Document. Recalling the statement quoted above, Gámir argues that "la mayoría de los actuales militantes han entrado directamente a UCD sin tener relación con las antiguas tendencias", concluding that this created the need for a new programme, "de centro, coherente y único, obtenido por vía deductiva desde unos principios básicos, de los que el liberalismo, la democracia cristiana y la socialdemocracia se convierten en 'fuentes', pero no en constantes protagonistas"<sup>55</sup>. The basic idea of the article was that UCD should attempt to pursue together two objectives which had been regarded as contradictory: freedom and equality. There was even a slight emphasis on the latter, indicating that the aim of the document was to reflect the centre-left strategy of the Government: "UCD cree que el camino es, desde el respeto a la libertad, conseguir la igualdad"<sup>56</sup>.

This document was not well-received by the more conservative factions, particularly the Christian Democrats, and was rejected. A new document was drawn up, which in some aspects represented a return to the original document, with contributions by Gámir and Arias Salgado, Manuel Núñez, and nine other UCD leaders, all associated with either the Liberal, Tácito or Christian Democrat sectors<sup>57</sup>. The resulting document retained the argument of combining freedom and equality, but recognised that conflict could arise between these two concepts, suggesting that in these cases, the principle of social solidarity should arbitrate<sup>58</sup>. References to personalism and subsidiarity, characteristic of Christian Democrat doctrine, were also introduced<sup>59</sup>, and the term "social market economy" was suppressed in favour of "corrected market economy".

The new document did manage to integrate the ideological principles of the different factions, but in a decidedly opaque fashion. In particular, the simultaneous pursuit of freedom

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<sup>55</sup> Luis Gámir, "La ideología de UCD", El País, 16 August 1978, p.7.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Luis Gámir, "La ideología de UCD", El País, 8 November 1978, p.9. The other ponentes were Alvarez, Alzaga, Caverro, Fontán, Galavís, Lavilla, Medina, Nasarre and Rupérez.

<sup>58</sup> "Principios ideológicos y modelo de sociedad de UCD", in La solución a un reto, Op.cit., p.194.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p.149 and p.156 ("proximidad").

and equality guided by social solidarity did not seem a useful basis for addressing concrete policy problems. Ideological convergence was achieved on the basis of confusion. The document passed by the Congress merely recognised that no faction had been able to impose its ideology on the others, and that a compromise had been reached without addressing key contradictions, although the Christian Democrat faction regarded the changes as a victory for their ideological position: "las bases ideológicas que se aprueban en el primer Congreso (...) fueron una solución sincretista con un mayor componente probablemente democristiano y liberal que socialdemócrata"<sup>60</sup>. The ideology emerging from the 1st Congress left untouched the sources of potential divergence over political objectives, and failed to address the problem of party strategy and the UCD social base. As one UCD member stated,

Neither this report nor any other document has clearly explained how such a synthesis could be produced from apparently opposed principles (...). While no clear philosophy emerged from this document issued by the first UCD Congress, in practice the tensions tended to be muffled by granting something to each group, eg. fiscal reform to the Social Democrats, private education to the Christian Democrats, etc.<sup>61</sup>.

The 1st UCD Congress, both in terms of organisation and ideology, seemed to deny that UCD was a factional party, while in practice recognising that different groups pursued different goals and wished to be represented as groups in the structure of the party. The way in which ideological questions were handled in UCD was a demonstration of this. The Commissions which were supposed to elaborate a common doctrine consistent with the unitary model adopted for party organisation were themselves part of a coalitional-style bargaining process. As Alzaga explains,

Hasta el segundo Congreso, siempre que hay cuestiones doctrinales o ideológicas se resuelven mediante comisiones tripartitas de democristianos, liberales y socialdemócratas, incluido las bases ideológicas que se aprueban en el primer Congreso (...). Cuando se planteaban cuestiones doctrinales, los azules decían que no eran una corriente<sup>62</sup>.

This seems to indicate that the Independents, favoured in the distribution of governmental

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<sup>60</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>61</sup> Luis de García San Miguel, "The ideology of Unión de Centro Democrático". European Journal of Political Research, No.9, 1981, p.443.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

power positions, renounced their proportional representation in these Commissions and allowed the Social Democrats, and particularly the Christian Democrats and Liberals, relatively marginalised from the centres of power, to get their own way on ideological issues. Moreover the Christian Democrats, through the Fundación Humanismo y Democracia (sponsored by the German CDU through the Fundación Konrad Adenauer) took responsibility for most of the UCD's training programmes for party officials<sup>63</sup>. The result was that the ideological inspiration of UCD policy positions, and the control over the ministries which were to put them into action, corresponded to rival factions, making coordination between them difficult. This contradiction was the result of confusion over where the coalitional model of party management ended and the presidential model began, but it meant that an opportunity to provide UCD members with a minimum of common identity was lost. According to the leading parliamentarian Miguel Herrero, this had disastrous consequences:

Es claro que un partido político no debe dejarse apresar en la túpida red de los dogmas ideológicos (...). (Pero) la negación de las tendencias ideológicas en UCD no ha conducido a síntesis alguna. En efecto, se trata ya de fórmulas ambiguas que por la vía de la carencia de contenido pretenden conciliar posiciones claras, y - legítimamente - dispares. La total indeterminación ideológica tiene como resultado una total confusión ideológica y una creciente falta de orientación sobre las metas de UCD en los cuadros del mismo partido<sup>64</sup>.

In fact the feeling amongst the dominant actors in UCD was that the creation of an organisational identity did not require a coherent ideology. One advisor to a senior member of the Government argued that

ideologies are synthetic creations. They close out options. There is no reason to close out options; we want to be open, to take a little from one and a little from another. Ideologies are conducive to Messianism. That style of politics leads to dogmatic argument. We want to be open and see no reason why we need an ideology. (...) The party is where its voters are<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992. This was confirmed by the Secretary General's report to the 2nd party Congress: Rafael Calvo Ortega, "Informe sobre la actuación de Unión de Centro Democrático entre el I y el II Congreso Nacional", reproduced in Eduardo Chamorro, Viaje al centro de UCD, Barcelona, Planeta, 1981, pp.250-298 (p.288).

<sup>64</sup> Miguel Herrero, "La federalización del centro político en España", document on strategy presented to the General Secretariat, September 1981; reproduced in Ideas para moderados, Madrid, Unión Editorial, 1982.

<sup>65</sup> Interview A7.

Therefore it is hardly surprising that Suárez was happy to allow the Christian Democrats and Liberals to take control of the elaboration of the party's doctrine as part of the power bargaining between the factions. The President had no intention of allowing his Government to be constrained by ideological documents. On the other hand, the Christian Democrats in particular were committed to formulating a coherent ideological position - a Christian Democratic position, naturally. In the words of one Christian Democrat, "we must involve ourselves in an ideological conflict with the PSOE. We must build an ideology which would appeal to intellectuals to attract them to the party"<sup>66</sup>. Calls for clarification were also made by the Liberals:

Nada hay que objetar a la definición de las características propias del partido - democrático, progresista, interclasista, integrador (...) - como no sea el abuso de conceptos difusos y demagógicos con escaso contenido, tales como "progresismo" y "sociedad socialmente avanzada"<sup>67</sup>.

In this sense the ideological question within UCD was as much a debate on whether the party required any doctrinal base at all, as it was a debate between different ideologies. This does not mean that it was not a source of conflict. The pro-ideology position implied that UCD should defend an established set of values, and by extension, interests, which could not be easily abandoned for the sake of electoral expediency - the logic of constituency representation, in Kitschelt's terms. The anti-ideology position implied avoiding commitments to values and interests, appealing instead to the electoral centre - the logic of electoral competition. Suárez's project of presidentialisation, although indifferent to ideological questions, was clearly committed to the strategy of electoral competition, and rejected demands for ideological clarification. This in effect postponed the problem of constructing a coherent set of organisational objectives accepted by all the party sub-groups, and establishing firm commitments with a social base. Whilst the party was immersed in the constituent process, this was not a problem, but the post-constituent phase was to leave UCD without any coherent political direction. This compromised the flow of collective incentives to the party sub-groups, leading to internal conflict over Government policy. At the same

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<sup>66</sup> Interview A9.

<sup>67</sup> Antonio Papell, Ideas para un partido de centro, Madrid, Unión Editorial, 1979, p.154 (the author was one of Garrigues' advisors).



time, the organisational development of the party had outstripped its ideological development, which meant that a rigidly centralised party structure had to cope with factional disagreement over party goals. This was a key weakness in Suárez's strategy of presidentialisation, but it did not stop the rapid development of an effective organisational machinery capable of carrying out a catch-all electoral strategy.

### **3. Organisational expansion: The "electoral machine"**

#### **3.1. The legislative elections of March 1979**

The project of presidentialisation involved the creation of an organised party structure under the direction of Arias Salgado, which would provide Suárez with a base of support reaching beyond the organisational presence of the factions. This process centred around the preparation of the legislative and municipal elections of 1979:

En la primera fase predomina la dimensión de maquinaria electoral, hasta la crisis del Congreso de Palma. Y las elecciones legislativas y municipales del 79 eran la demostración de que ya existía una maquinaria electoral. Es la maquinaria electoral que se monta desde la convocatoria del 77 y que se consolida. Era una maquinaria que tiene como objetivo transmitir un mensaje y captar unos votos. Todo lo que tenga como objetivo las elecciones acaba imponiéndose como prioridad<sup>68</sup>.

This emphasis on electoral deadlines favoured the presidentialisation of the party. UCD's electoral strategy, in 1979 as in 1977, revolved around the resources controlled by Adolfo Suárez: his personal popularity as the bringer of democracy and the "electoral machine" established to serve him. The success of the 1979 campaign - UCD repeated its 1977 vote, gaining three seats - confirmed the President's authority as the key electoral asset of UCD, and pre-empted any internal opposition over organisational strategy.

The results of the legislative elections of March 1979 showed little variation from those of 1977 (see Table 4.2.). Both UCD and the PSOE maintained, with slight increases, their share of the vote and their seats in Parliament. The decline into insignificance of Alianza Popular (which stood as Coalición Democrática) seemed to further strengthen UCD's position in the party system, leaving it as the only relevant national political force to the right of the

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<sup>68</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

Socialists, and reducing further the exit options available to UCD conservatives. The important increase in votes for regionalist parties seemed to punish the PSOE (especially in Andalusia) more than UCD, which increased its strength in Catalonia from 16.8% to 19.4% of the vote<sup>69</sup>, defeating the Catalan nationalists of *Convergència i Unió*.

This result was perceived as an important victory for UCD, whose actual electoral strength was much greater than that predicted in the opinion polls. Throughout the period between the 1977 and 1979 elections, intended votes for UCD had failed to approach 30%, or to mark any significant advantage over the PSOE. In one poll published on February 6 1979 (three weeks before the elections) only 19% of voters said they would vote for UCD, compared with 29% for the PSOE<sup>70</sup>. Another, published the following day, was less catastrophic, but still only 18.4% of voters expressed their support for UCD, compared to 21% for the PSOE, and, importantly, 32.3% undecided<sup>71</sup>. In view of the election results, it seems clear that many of these indecisive voters ultimately voted for UCD. This indicates the instability of the UCD electorate, with around a third of its voters making their decision at the last minute, and fewer committed voters than the PSOE (which also had a small number of identifiers).

The nature of the campaign suggests that, as in 1977, the UCD's electoral success would not have been possible without the electoral resources controlled by Adolfo Suárez<sup>72</sup>. It is largely recognised that a key factor in swaying undecided voters was a speech made by Suárez on television on the eve of the elections, in which he appealed for a vote against the left and the risks of a Socialist government<sup>73</sup>. In general, the State-controlled television played an important role in UCD's campaign, and its blatant partiality in favour of the governing party must have had some impact on the decisions of the non-identifying voters

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<sup>69</sup> Caciagli, Elecciones y partidos en la transición española, Op.cit., p.131.

<sup>70</sup> Poll by ICSA-Gallup, published in ABC, 6 February 1979. Reproduced in Jorge de Esteban and Luis López-Guerra, Las elecciones legislativas del 1 de marzo de 1979, Madrid, CIS, 1979.

<sup>71</sup> Poll by Sofemasa, published in El País, 7 February 1979, reproduced in de Esteban and López Guerra, Las elecciones legislativas del 1 de marzo de 1979, Op.cit., pp.251-59.

<sup>72</sup> For the importance of leadership in the 1979 election campaign see Gunther, Sani and Shabad, Spain after Franco, Op.cit., p.297-303.

<sup>73</sup> According to one source, a study directed by specialists of the German SPD discovered that this speech had mobilised almost a million votes for UCD: Josep Meliá, Así cayó Adolfo Suárez, Barcelona, Planeta, 1981, p.19.

of the marais<sup>74</sup>. A study of television coverage of the campaign clearly revealed this partiality; out of the 11 politicians most frequently mentioned on TVE, 10 were UCD ministers, and the other was an extremist Basque nationalist. Similarly, the ten politicians who appeared most on TVE were all UCD ministers, and none of them were from the UCD factions least supportive of Suárez (the rival barons, Alvarez de Miranda, Fernández Ordóñez and Garrigues did not appear at all)<sup>75</sup>. The importance of television in winning votes, and Suárez's direct influence over the state radio and television company (RTVE), confirm the concentration of important electoral resources around the President.

Moreover, as in 1977, Adolfo Suárez remained the most popular political leader, just ahead of Felipe González<sup>76</sup>. One poll, in which people were asked for a first and second leadership preference, gave Suárez 20% of first preferences and 9% of second preferences, as opposed to Felipe González's 16% and 12%. Suárez's rivals on the right, Areilza and Fraga, received only 4% and 5% and 1% and 2% respectively, showing that the UCD leader was by far the most popular politician in the centre-right political space. This demonstrated that the PSOE leader was Suárez's main political rival, and confirmed the importance of Suárez's popularity for winning over undecided centre voters. The UCD campaign was almost exclusively concerned with defeating the PSOE, and virtually ignored Fraga's Coalición Democrática as a serious rival. This tactic appears to have worked, since survey data showed that 33% of those who had voted for AP in 1977 voted for UCD two years later<sup>77</sup>. The offensive against the PSOE was based on its formal espousal of Marxism, which allowed UCD to present itself as the only secure way to democratic reform. One observer has summarised the UCD message as follows:

UCD ha cumplido lo que prometió, y el PSOE no está en condiciones de hacer lo propio (...). Lo que se resolverá en las elecciones no es la forma de acometer problemas concretos, sino la elección de un determinado modelo de

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<sup>74</sup> See the data presented by Barnes, McDonough and López Piña, "The development of partisanship in new democracies: The case of Spain", Op.cit., discussed in the previous Chapter.

<sup>75</sup> De Esteban and López Guerra, Las elecciones legislativas..., Op.cit., p.237.

<sup>76</sup> Suárez received an extraordinary high approval rating of 7 out of 10 in the polls of this period (Javier Tusell, La transición española a la democracia, Madrid, Historia 16, 1991, p.124).

<sup>77</sup> Gunther, Sani and Shabad, Spain after Franco, Op.cit., p.286.

sociedad<sup>78</sup>.

UCD hoped to present itself as the only viable and democratic government option, emphasising the PSOE's inability to abandon Marxist dogma.

The campaign was closely controlled by Suárez's team: he appointed Fernando Abril's brother, Joaquín, to direct the campaign, and he was later assisted by Rafael Ansón, also close to Suárez. The mechanics of the campaign were characteristic of the "American" style of electoral competition, using publicity agencies and the mass media, avoiding specific messages and concentrating on the personal attractiveness of the party leader. Rather than electoral meetings with a political message, UCD organised youth and children's festivals and rallies with pop musicians<sup>79</sup>. All this was consistent with the strategy of presidentialisation: Suárez's image was the favoured means of electoral mobilisation, whilst appeals to sectoral interests were carefully avoided.

Suárez's dominance over electoral questions was such that the UCD barons at no stage aspired to a major role in campaign strategy<sup>80</sup>; this included Martín Villa, whose collaborator Manuel Núñez, Secretary of Electoral Action, was practically excluded from the organisation of the campaign. This suggests that the creation of a basic "electoral machine" under Arias Salgado had reduced Suárez's organisational dependency on the Minister of the Interior and his network of Independents. The role of the Civil Governors after 1977, according to one party official, has been exaggerated:

Efectivamente los Gobernadores Civiles algo hacían con respecto a la estructura del partido, pero vamos, el partido fue creciendo por sí sólo como estructura (...). lo que hacían los Gobernadores era el canvassing, el ver quién era quién en las provincias. Pero la selección de las listas no lo hacían los Gobernadores Civiles. Las listas se hacían en Madrid, básicamente<sup>81</sup>.

Although Martín Villa still had notable influence over the party organisation, he was no

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<sup>78</sup> Joaquín García Morillo, "El desarrollo de la campaña", in de Esteban/López Guerra, Las elecciones legislativas..., Op.cit., pp.189-291 (p.206).

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p.239.

<sup>80</sup> See Pedro J.Ramírez, Así se ganaron las elecciones 1979, Op.cit., p.68-71.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

longer in a position to control the electoral lists as he had in 1977. Instead the lists were negotiated in a less chaotic fashion, although the President's direct supervision - now legitimised by the party statutes<sup>82</sup> - was maintained:

En el 79 UCD ya era un partido organizado, y se partió del informe y la opinión que había sobre los que habían sido diputados y senadores. (...) Había un comité electoral que se le escuchó, pero en última instancia decidió Suárez, y el Secretario General - eso era un tema que Suárez cuidaba mucho<sup>83</sup>.

Indeed, before calling the elections, Suárez charged Pérez Llorca with the compilation of a report on the record of each deputy during the Constituent Legislature, in order to prepare the way for candidate selection<sup>84</sup>. Many of these reports must have been negative as the continuity of the UCD parliamentary elite between the Constituent Legislature and the First Legislature is surprisingly low: only 163 UCD parliamentarians continued into the First Legislature, along with 125 new parliamentarians (replacing 112 who left Parliament in 1979).

More than Suárez himself, the domination of the Government and the party apparatus can be detected in the changes made to the lists. In this sense, the changes involving prominent ministers constituted an element of "repenetration" from the Executive, confirming that organisational power in UCD was centralised both territorially, around the capital, and institutionally, around the Government. Four ministers who were also deputies moved from Madrid to other provinces (as Number One on the list)<sup>85</sup>, whilst 10 ministers entered Congress for the first time, all but one of them as Number One on the list<sup>86</sup>. Similarly, Olarte Cullén (advisor to Suárez) in Gran Canaria, Javier Moscoso (to become Secretary General for Relations with the Cortes in April 1979) in Navarra, Martín-Retortillo (Secretary of State - later Minister - for Public Administration) in Huesca, González Seara (Secretary

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<sup>82</sup> Article 21.1; see La solución a un reto, Op.cit.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992. This is confirmed by the Secretary General: "Las candidaturas las hizo Suárez todas" (Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992).

<sup>84</sup> Pedro J. Ramírez, Así se ganaron las elecciones 1979, Op.cit., p.19.

<sup>85</sup> Fernández Ordóñez to Zaragoza, Garrigues to Murcia, Cavero to Palma de Mallorca and Camuñas to Valladolid.

<sup>86</sup> Lavilla to Jaén and Oreja to Guipúzcoa, Otero Novas to Lugo, García Díez to Cádiz, Oliart to Badajoz (as Number Two), Lamo de Espinosa to Castellón, Martín Villa to León, Calvo Ortega to Oviedo, Abril Martorell to Valencia, Rodríguez Sahagún to Vizcaya.

of State - later Minister - for the Universities) in Pontevedra, and De La Mata (Minister for Social Security in Suárez's first Government) in Teruel, all entered Congress as Number One on the list. Two members of the UCD Secretariat - Rúperez in Cuenca, and Medina in Sevilla - were also elected to Congress. In other words, 18 UCD provincial organisations quietly accepted the arrival as leading candidates of members of the Administration, whose connections with the area were in many cases tenuous<sup>87</sup>. Amongst these provinces, Valencia and Oviedo, dominated by the coalitional parties in 1977 and with a strong presence of the Christian Democrat and Liberal factions, acquiesced in the arrival at the top of the list of figures closely associated with the President: Abril and Calvo Ortega. That this Government interference took place with very few tensions (and those were quickly resolved by presidential intervention<sup>88</sup>) is indicative of the centralisation of organisational authority around Suárez and his collaborators.

In the Congress of Deputies renewal took place within a context of maintaining the equilibria established at the party's formation. Only minor changes in factional strength took place: the Liberals, possibly because of the illness of Garrigues, lost four deputies, whilst the Social Democrats, closer to Suárez, gained three (see Table 4.3.). Otherwise, Suárez did not increase his centralised control over the party by "purging" his parliamentary group, although he did oblige his parliamentarians to sign an undated letter of resignation<sup>89</sup>. Instead the drawing up of lists for the 1979 elections reflected the domination of the Government over the party apparatus: the intervention of the provincial organisation established by the statutes was ignored<sup>90</sup>. The consequence of the failure to create a more ideologically homogeneous parliamentary group was that it left intact the power bases of the factional leaders, which would act as a brake on the centralisation of powers around the presidential circle.

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<sup>87</sup> In only two of the 18 cases had the candidates been born in the provinces they were to represent. The examples of Lavilla (from Lérida to Jaén), Fernández Ordóñez (Madrid to Zaragoza), and Garrigues (from Madrid to Murcia) seemed totally arbitrary. Caveró's only link with Baleares was that he spent his summer holidays there (Interview, July 1992).

<sup>88</sup> See Ramírez, *Así se ganaron las elecciones 1979*, Op.cit., pp.106-111, for the difficulties in Murcia, Pontevedra and Oviedo. See also Jorge de Esteban and Luis López Guerra, "Electoral rules and candidate selection", in Penniman and Mujal-León, *Spain at the polls: 1977, 1979 and 1982*, Op.cit., pp.48-72.

<sup>89</sup> Miguel Herrero, *Memorias de estío*, Op.cit., p.182.

<sup>90</sup> "El partido provincial prácticamente no tuvo ninguna intervención": Interview with Iñigo Caveró, July 1992.

The change in the UCD parliamentary elite was not evenly distributed between the two Chambers. The composition of the group in the Senate did change significantly: both the Liberals and the Partido Popular lost ground, and the presence of Independents grew from 43 to 67 (see Table 4.3.). At first sight, this suggests that continuity in the Congress was counter-balanced by a greater presidential control of the UCD group in the Senate. However, a closer analysis reveals that a shift had in fact taken place within the group of Independents in the Senate. Whereas in 1977, this group could be expected to be close to Suárez and Martín Villa, from 1979 this was not so clear. Whilst most of the Independents in the Congress were close to the territorial structure of UCD through their contacts with the State Administration, and entered parliament through the pressures of Martín Villa, and to a lesser extent Suárez, many of the 49 new Independent Senators were unrelated to the administrative elite of the previous regime. This would make them less willing to enter into a recreation of the hierarchical and bureaucratic structure of the Movimiento, and less dependent on the leaders of this structure for the defence of their interests. Table 4.4. confirms that the interests represented by the new Independents in the Senate had shifted: many of them represented agricultural and local business interests. In the constituent legislature, the UCD group in the Senate had contained many Independents who represented important agricultural interests - often their own - in their provinces. This was accentuated by the renewal in the 1979 elections: out of 49 new Independent Senators, 16 represented organised local business interests in some way<sup>91</sup>, and 27 had personal business interests. Senators were elected because of their affiliation to UCD, but UCD owed many votes to the important local power positions represented by their Senators. Parliamentarians prominent in the local Cámara Agraria or who ran agricultural concerns employing many labourers had autonomous political resources which put them in a powerful position with respect to the party leadership. A notable example of this are two Senators for the rural province of Soria (Borque Guillén and García Royo), who were elected standing independently of UCD in 1977, and then re-elected representing UCD two years later. The fact that both later became party dissidents indicates the difficulty of controlling party elites with local power bases.

In short, the renewal of the UCD parliamentary elite in 1979 left intact the initial diffusion present at the party's formation, and can be seen as a significant hindrance to the

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<sup>91</sup> Cajas de Ahorros, Cámaras Agrarias y de Comercio, various kinds of Asociaciones Provinciales de Empresarios and Sindicatos de Riego.

project of presidential hegemonisation. As far as the provincial organisation of the party was concerned, the arrival of Government ministers in provinces where UCD had little presence represented a "repenetration" from the central nucleus, permitting a greater coherence of the party's territorial base. But the new UCD parliamentary groups would not easily submit themselves to unrestrained presidential authority. The group in the Congress remained to a large extent the feud of the factional leaders, maintaining Suárez's parliamentary dependence on the original UCD barons. The UCD deputies were largely owing to the barons for their political careers, since their inclusion in the lists was decided centrally as a result of the bargaining between Suárez and the barons. Similarly, the collective incentives (or policy payoffs) they received were due to the presence of factional representatives in Government, in the absence of a strong presidential role in the definition of policy objectives. To this extent the distribution of incentives from the President to UCD deputies was still conditioned by the mediation of the original coalitional leaders, which implied the persistence of diffusion, a phenomenon difficult to accommodate within a highly centralised party organisation. The group in the Senate, on the other hand, was less ideologically heterogeneous, but characterised by a diffusion of a different kind - the decentralisation of control over political and electoral resources, which gave some Senators considerable autonomy in their dealings with the party leadership.

Despite the exclusion of the parliamentary party from the process of presidentialisation, the second electoral victory of UCD confirmed the central role of Adolfo Suárez, in particular, and his Government, as opposed to the rest of the party, in acquiring parliamentary representation. This meant a further restriction of the party's dominant coalition: the resources needed for the party's electoral maintenance were in the hands of a very small group of people, and centralised around the figure of the President. As in 1977, perhaps the only qualification to this was the role of finance; unofficial sources claimed that major Spanish banks, with the mediation of the CEOE, had provided UCD with a credit of 3000 million pesetas for its electoral campaigns in 1979, as the party which could most feasibly defend their interests from government<sup>92</sup>. The agreement on which this financing was based is not easy to interpret. One would imagine that it would not be given without the hope of some kind of favourable treatment in exchange. However, it is also true that the

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<sup>92</sup> De Esteban and López Guerra, Las elecciones legislativas..., Op.cit., pp.173-175.



banks were aware that the only way of preventing a Socialist victory, at that time, was to make sure UCD won the elections. Secretary General Arias Salgado has claimed that UCD obtained this help without entering into a dependency relationship:

Nuestra autonomía respecto a la CEOE es de tal magnitud que la primera póliza de crédito de 100 millones para financiar la campaña electoral del año 79 lleva la firma de Adolfo Suárez, Fernando Abril y mía como avalistas de la deuda. Nunca se aceptó condicionamientos. Nosotros entendíamos, que la financiación de las campañas electorales se hacía en función de planteamientos globales. Todo esto es muy rudimentario, pero es que la política española estaba organizada de una manera muy rudimentaria en aquella época. Después la vida se va a complejizar, las organizaciones se hacen más maduras y se ramifican<sup>93</sup>.

This indicates that business interests were unable to impose conditions on their support of UCD because of their own organisational weakness. The CEOE, which was to become the main representative body of Spanish business, had only been founded in 1977, and was still in the process of consolidating its position and affiliation<sup>94</sup>. As shall be argued later, the subsequent attacks of the CEOE on the UCD Government indicated both the increasing strength of the organisation and its disappointment with the policies followed by the Government they helped to elect.

However in 1979 the UCD was the only feasible alternative to a Socialist government, and as a consequence conservative social forces such as big business and the Catholic Church had no choice but to support Suárez, permitting UCD a high level of organisational autonomy, again on the basis of an absence of exit options. In this sense, given the high dependency of other organisational actors on Suárez for electoral resources, the failure to reduce factional presence in the UCD parliamentary group in the Congress can be regarded as a missed opportunity for the project of presidentialisation. This had serious consequences for the development of a presidentialist party, as it implied a dysfunction between the parliamentary group, which retained the factional characteristics of the genetic model, and the growing party apparatus, dominated by the Presidency.

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<sup>93</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>94</sup> For an account of the CEOE's development see Robert Martínez and Rafael Pardo Avellaneda, "El asociacionismo empresarial español en la transición", *Papeles de Economía Española*, 22, 1985.

### 3.2. The municipal elections of April 1979 and the establishment of a local base

The calling of the first municipal elections of the new democracy was a further organisational challenge for the new party, and a further opportunity for party expansion directed by the leadership. The magnitude of the task - 69,715 local councillors were to be elected in 8046 municipal constituencies<sup>95</sup> - was if anything much more imposing than the difficulties of winning national legislative elections. Although participation in municipal elections is lower, the visibility of local councillors in small communities is very high, and in this sense the selection of adequate candidates would be significant for the party's national presence. The preparation of the municipal elections was a key part of the strategy of the UCD apparatus to establish a presence throughout the national territory, and appears to have been successful. A senior member of the apparatus has stated that

la estrategia estrictamente organizativa era conseguir el máximo número posible de organizaciones locales y provinciales en todo el territorio nacional. Eso tuvo un punto de apoyo enormemente importante en el enorme trabajo que desplegamos para poder presentar en las elecciones municipales de 1979 6.000 candidatos. Mientras que el PSOE cubrió únicamente 1.100 o 1.200. Eso nos dio una implantación muy sólida en todo el territorio<sup>96</sup>.

This suggests that the after April 1979 UCD had a solid territorial presence on which to base the development of the party. The way in which this was achieved could be described as corresponding to the concept of penetration, since the whole operation was directed by the UCD party apparatus, with the logistical assistance of the Government and the State Administration. In this sense it permitted organisational expansion "from above", establishing a local base under the authority of the Secretary General, and by extension the President.

The UCD Secretariat set about compiling reports on the various municipalities in 1978, indicating that the party apparatus in Madrid intended to control the process of local organisation. As in the creation of a party network in 1977, in many cases UCD had to find candidates where no party structure existed, especially in isolated rural areas. This was achieved by a process of penetration, creating a party structure out of nothing with new

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<sup>95</sup> Jordi Capó Giol, "Elecciones municipales, pero no locales", Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 56, 1991, pp.143-164 (p.155).

<sup>96</sup> Interview B1.

candidates, or by "signing up" local councillors and mayors appointed during the Franco regime. The Social Democrat Arturo Moya, UCD's first Secretary for Electoral Action, devised a strategy which mimicked the absorption of the local ruling elites by the Government which had taken place at the 1977 legislative elections: "la acción electoral de UCD será muy directa: nuestros candidatos serán los líderes naturales de cada pueblo y diputados y senadores en las grandes capitales"<sup>97</sup>.

The UCD strategy for candidate selection varied according to local conditions, and responded to the idea of UCD as an inter-class, catch-all party:

Given the social heterogeneity of the population, no single national-level party image (such as that projected through television broadcasts by party leaders) could successfully appeal to all relevant target groups. The remoulding or local adjustment of the UCD image through the selection of different kinds of elites in different areas, however, served to broaden this appeal considerably. Through the selection of conservative candidates in conservative areas and progressive candidates in others, the recruitment of candidates for the municipal elections enabled the UCD to strengthen its basis of support<sup>98</sup>.

The local conditions to which the party strategy adapted were, fundamentally, the socio-economic characteristics of the area, and the presence or absence of significant political figures, "opinion leaders", or in some areas<sup>99</sup> genuine caciques, against whom it would be difficult to compete. In many cases the two went together: the incorporation of Francoist mayors and councillors into UCD was much greater in small municipalities, where local figures were likely to have a degree of control over the community, than in towns and cities. In Galicia, there was a notable difference between the selection procedure in the poorer rural province of Orense than in the more prosperous coastal province of Coruña. The UCD lists in Orense contained many ex-Francoists and Movimentistas, whilst in the municipality of Coruña, many leading figures of the opposition to the Francoist mayor were included<sup>100</sup>. In areas such as the Canary Islands and parts of Castilla-León, UCD coopted many existing

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<sup>97</sup> Cambio 16, 315, 11-17 December 1977, p.20.

<sup>98</sup> Gunther, Sani and Shabad, Spain after Franco, Op.cit., p.137.

<sup>99</sup> In particular Galicia and the Canary Islands.

<sup>100</sup> "UCD presenta hombres nuevos en La Coruña y alcaldes franquistas en Orense", El País, 13 March 1979, p.14.

municipal representatives<sup>101</sup>, whereas in the province of Madrid most of the party's candidates were not associated with the previous municipal regime<sup>102</sup>.

The presence of Councillors from the Franco regime reflected the use of the State machinery in UCD's preparation of the municipal elections, an important part of the organisational strategy of the party apparatus. In fact the UCD campaign resembled on occasions an institutional campaign on the behalf of the various ministries controlled by the party. UCD candidates reminded voters of the usefulness of their membership of the government party<sup>103</sup>, a message which was also repeated by ministers, notably Minister of the Interior Martín Villa and Minister of Transport Sánchez Terán. Sánchez Terán, campaigning in Salamanca, where he was elected deputy, appealed for "coherence" between national and local government, and even promised action by the Ministry of Public Works to resolve the housing problems of one municipality<sup>104</sup>. Such instances confirm that, as in previous elections, Government played a key role in the territorial expansion of the party organisation. For a party of only 70,000 members (known for their low level of activism)<sup>105</sup> to present over 57,345 candidates in municipal elections<sup>106</sup> after less than two years of existence was an impressive organisational feat. UCD candidates were present in 6,322 municipalities (90%), covering 98% of the electoral roll<sup>107</sup>. In Aragon, for instance, UCD presented lists in 80% of municipalities, as opposed to 30% for the PSOE<sup>108</sup>; in León UCD

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<sup>101</sup> "Canarias: Los ayuntamientos seguirán en las mismas manos", El País, 3 April 1979; "Castilla/León: Temor a una oferta caciquil de UCD", El País, 18 March 1979, p.17.

<sup>102</sup> "Casi todos los actuales alcaldes y concejales desaparecerán tras las municipales", El País, 14 March 1979, p.24. Moreover, of those ex-Francoists standing in the province of Madrid, only half of them stood for UCD.

<sup>103</sup> See for instance "UCD de Jaén dice tener 'hilo directo con la Moncloa'", El País, 25 March 1979, p.14.

<sup>104</sup> "UCD utiliza para su propaganda todos los resortes de la Administración", El País, 27 March 1979, p.20.

<sup>105</sup> José Ramón Montero, "Partidos y participación política: Algunas notas sobre la afiliación política en la etapa inicial de la transición española", Revista de Estudios Políticos, 23, September-October 1981, pp.33-72 (p.40).

<sup>106</sup> Gunther, Sani, Shabad, Spain after Franco, Op.cit., p.137.

<sup>107</sup> "Los centristas en marcha", Diario 16, 13 March 1979, p.1.

<sup>108</sup> "El interés se centra en la batalla por el Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza", El País, 15 March 1979, p.20.

presented 183 lists, compared with 86 for the PSOE<sup>109</sup>; in Galicia, noted for the fragmentation and isolation of its centres of population, UCD candidates were present in 93.5% of municipalities, whereas the PSOE only stood in 55.1%<sup>110</sup>. It is clear that this was not achieved by the party structure alone. As in the first legislative elections, the Civil Governors played an important role in the preparation of electoral lists<sup>111</sup>. One critic of this was Oscar Alzaga:

Adolfo Suárez llega a las elecciones municipales utilizando los Gobiernos Civiles como principal aparato de poder. (...) desde luego los Gobernadores Civiles mantenían la búsqueda de gente en los pueblos, y mediante la preparación de las listas en las elecciones locales conseguían mantener una cierta influencia en 1979<sup>112</sup>.

Other subjective accounts by UCD leaders play down the role of the State Administration. Martín Villa, Minister of the Interior and as such responsible for the Civil Governors, described the process as follows:

Con el trabajo realizado durante el otoño y la ayuda que in extremis tuvieron que prestar algunos responsables de provincias los gobernadores, UCD pudo presentar unas ocho mil listas con un total de ochenta mil candidatos<sup>113</sup>.

According to Secretary General Arias Salgado, the bulk of the work was carried out by the party's own electoral machinery:

Hizo muchas más candidaturas el partido como tal que los Gobernadores Civiles. Toda la gente más valiosa de UCD, la que no había estado en el régimen anterior, no habría sido nunca candidato de la mano del Gobernador Civil. Entonces, ¿dónde ayudarán? Allí donde un partido como UCD tiene muchas más dificultades para llegar, en los

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<sup>109</sup> "Batalla del centro a los socialistas", Diario 16, 15 March 1979, p.12.

<sup>110</sup> Guillermo Márquez Cruz, "La transición local en Galicia: Continuidad de las élites políticas del franquismo y renovación de los Gobiernos locales", Revista de Estudios Políticos, 80, April-June 1993, pp.39-119 (p.70).

<sup>111</sup> 23 of the 50 mayors of provincial capitals were affiliated to or close to UCD, 11 of which had been appointed under Suárez's Presidency (Cambio 16, 339, 4-10 June 1978, p.34). More than half of the Civil Governors had been appointed by Suárez's Minister of the Interior Martín Villa between July 1976 and June 1977 (Huneeus, Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.166). This was the key to Martín Villa's control over a significant part of the UCD provincial organisation.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>113</sup> Martín Villa, Al servicio del Estado, Op.cit., p.88. The figures, as can be seen in Table 4, are inaccurate.

pueblos pequeños. Los Gobernadores Civiles suministraban información muy valiosa, sobre personas que podrían ser buenos candidatos. Pero no podían apoyar ni podían ayudar mucho en la formación de las candidaturas, porque la gente no iba de la mano de los Gobernadores Civiles, había una resistencia. No se puede hablar de una operación administrativa desde el centro porque teníamos a los alcaldes en contra (...). Decir que UCD contaba con las estructuras del régimen anterior es falso. Para gran parte de la infraestructura del régimen anterior Suárez era un traidor<sup>114</sup>.

According to these sources, much of the organisational effort of preparing the municipal elections fell to UCD, independently of the State structure (although with UCD being the party of government, such a distinction is difficult to make - local party officials were often State functionaries). Unlike in the legislative elections, the provincial party organisation made a significant contribution to the preparation of the UCD candidatures<sup>115</sup>. In any case, the undeniable contribution made by the Civil Governors does not imply that UCD lacked a genuine organisational structure with a degree of autonomy from the State structure. As one party official confirms: "las organizaciones provinciales nacen con la ayuda del aparato del Estado, y después se van independizando, van afirmando su propia autonomía"<sup>116</sup>.

Moreover, the intervention of the Civil Governors did not fill the UCD lists with survivors of the old municipal power structures. In the case of the province of Madrid, the immense task of seeking out new candidates was directed by the Civil Governor Juan José Rosón (who had been Director General of RTVE when Suárez was sub-Director). In spite of this, the party chose, in view of the relatively modern socio-economic structure of the area, not to incorporate any significant part of the existing local elite<sup>117</sup>. Recent research on local elites in Andalusia and Galicia<sup>118</sup> has revealed that in those regions too, the vast majority of UCD candidates had not formed part of the Francoist municipal elite. This data, while it cannot totally clarify the organisational capacity of UCD as a party and its dependence on the State structure, suggests that the UCD local elite was much more than the cooptation of

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<sup>114</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>117</sup> "Casi todos los actuales alcaldes desaparecerán tras las municipales", cit.

<sup>118</sup> Guillermo Márquez Cruz, Movilidad política y lealtad partidista en Andalucía, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1992; "La transición local en Galicia: La continuidad en las élites políticas del franquismo y renovación de los Gobiernos locales", Op.cit.

existing power structures.

The most noticeable point about this data is that it reveals the extent of the renewal of the Spanish local political class in 1979<sup>119</sup>. Table 4.5 shows that in Andalusia, only 573 of the 8729 Councillors elected - 6.5% - had served under the previous regime, whilst in Galicia 491 ex-Francoists were elected out of a total of 4070 Councillors (12.1%). Even in Galicia, a stronghold of caciquil structures, 8 out of 10 Councillors elected in 1979 had not formed part of the Francoist local elite (Table 4.6.). In this context, it is clear that UCD could only absorb a small proportion of the sitting municipal representatives. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 show that the vast majority of UCD candidates and elected local officials in 1979 were new to local government. In Andalusia, 589 ex-Francoists were present on the UCD lists, representing only 6.2% of its 9523 candidates. A qualitative analysis demonstrates that these ex-Francoists were often powerful, or popular, figures, who were more likely to occupy the most important power positions: in Andalusia, they represented 11.4% of the 3491 elected Councillors, but 37.4% of the 283 UCD Councillors elected mayor. However, the fact remains that 88.6 % of UCD Councillors in Andalusia were new to local government. In Galicia, on the other hand, 515 out of UCD's 4424 candidates (11.6%), and 352 out of its 1785 elected Councillors (19.7 %), had served the Francoist local government, almost double the proportion in Andalusia. This clearly shows the UCD policy of adapting organisational strategy to local conditions (the peculiarities of the Galician political culture and its socio-economic backwardness are well-documented<sup>120</sup>), but it also shows that even in extreme cases such as Galicia, UCD still managed to recruit 80% of its representatives from outside the existing local government elite.

This analysis shows that the role of the State administration in the organisational development of UCD should not be over-estimated. Obviously, given the peculiarities of these two regions, this data cannot be regarded as neatly representative of what happened in the rest of Spain, and should therefore be handled with care. However, it is also true that in 1979 Andalusia and Galicia together contained 24.9% of the Spanish population and 13.5% of the

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<sup>119</sup> Also revealed by studies on Catalonia. For example, Jordi Capo, Montserrat Baras, Joan Botella and Gabriel Colomé, "La formación de una élite política local", Revista de Estudios Políticos, 59, 1988, pp.189-225.

<sup>120</sup> See for example, J.G. Sequeiros Tizón, El talante del Sr. Breogán (Estructura económica y comportamiento político en Galicia), Op.cit.

municipal constituencies<sup>121</sup>. Galicia can be taken as the one of the most extreme cases of socio-economic under-development and traditional power structures, whereas Andalusia is an example of a region which has traditionally rejected right-wing authoritarianism and which has seen considerable worker and peasant mobilisation. In this sense, it is logical that UCD should seek to capitalise on the social acceptance of existing local power in the first case, and avoid associating itself with an unpopular local elite in the second. It can be postulated that areas such as Castilla-León, Cantabria and the Canary Islands<sup>122</sup> were closer to the Galician pattern, whilst regions such as Catalonia, Asturias and Valencia, with stronger traditions of resistance to Francoism, would be closer to the model of Andalusia. It seems likely that the extent of UCD's absorption of the Francoist local elite in other regions of Spain would oscillate between the levels found in these two regions.

The formation of the UCD at local level was therefore much more than a simple recycling of the Francoist elite. In this sense the organisational pattern corresponds to the model of penetration rather than to that of diffusion. The UCD party apparatus, mainly through its highly centralised pyramidal structure, with the help of the State Administration - another centralised structure - created a new local elite composed in large part of individuals who had not exercised local power during the dictatorship. The organisational consequences of this were that the local base of UCD would not be particularly conditioned by the presence of autonomous local power bases dating back to before the transition. The renewal of the local elite also implied the integration of younger and more dynamic elements in the party, who owed their election to the party and its leadership, rather than any particular faction, facilitating organisational loyalty and cohesion. Most importantly, the factions' limited territorial presence prevented them from penetrating into the UCD municipal elite in any significant degree. In the words of the Secretary General,

Después de las elecciones municipales, todo lo que es la infraestructura del partido, ha dejado de pertenecer, no ha pertenecido nunca de hecho a las corrientes originarias (...) empieza la formación de un partido político con vocación de partido mayoritario en el que los puntos de referencia son básicamente una ideología reformista con un liderazgo

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<sup>121</sup> Irene Delgado Sotillos and Lourdes López Nieto, "Un análisis de las elecciones municipales (Contribución a partir del caso español)", *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 76, April-June 1992, pp.195-219 (p.202).

<sup>122</sup> For an analysis of electoral behaviour and *caciquismo* in the Canary Islands, see José Hernández Bravo de Laguna, *Las elecciones políticas en Canarias 1976-1986*, Consejería de la Presidencia del Gobierno de Canarias, 1987.



encarnado en la persona de Adolfo Suárez (...) éstos son los dos puntos de referencia principales en torno a los cuales la gente que comparece en las elecciones municipales se siente básicamente vinculada. En el nivel municipal los candidatos a concejal ya no reflejaban el origen de coalición del partido<sup>123</sup>.

In consequence, the massive influx of new organisational actors without independent power bases or factional links favoured the presidentialisation of the party. The creation of a new organisational level under the authority of the party apparatus undermined the position of the factional leaders whose power bases were limited to Parliament. It was also an important step towards consolidation, in that the new municipal elite was largely new to local government, and was less likely to be simply using UCD as a formula for political survival. This meant that for many of them loyalty to the organisation would not necessarily be compromised by electoral defeat<sup>124</sup>. It is difficult not to see these developments as a significant step towards organisational consolidation. The creation of a party structure beyond the control of the original CD barons suggested that party survival was becoming less and less dependent on the short-term interests of the factional leaders, whose allegiance to the organisation was in doubt.

The global results of the municipal elections confirmed UCD's narrow electoral advantage over the PSOE, and its clear hegemony over the space to the right of the Socialists (see Table 4.7.). The distance between UCD and the PSOE was reduced from 4.5 to 3.5%, although the high abstention (37.37%) worked against UCD. UCD was the most voted list in 4,276 out of 8,046 municipal constituencies. In terms of Councillors and Mayors elected, UCD's domination was impressive: 43.3% of all Councillors (more than double the PSOE), 49.4% of all Mayors (more than three times those of the PSOE) and a massive 72% of presidents of provincial Diputaciones. Over 2,500,000 votes and almost 17,000 Councillors went to Independent lists, who would be far less aggressive rivals than the Socialists.

In spite of this clear victory, however, the impression created by these results was of defeat for UCD, since a pact between the PSOE and the PCE denied it the post of Mayor in

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Indeed after the 1982 electoral disaster, UCD's local base continued to operate for some months in spite of the decomposition of the party's national elite (Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.490; Interviews with Javier Rupérez, May 1992 and Iñigo Cavero, July 1992).

most major cities, even in cases where the UCD received most votes (such as Madrid)<sup>125</sup>. This gave the parties of the left - in particular the PSOE - a local power base from which to launch their offensive against the UCD Government. It also created an impression of defeat within UCD, discrediting the organisational strategy of penetration through State and party provincial structures, and providing the opponents of this strategy with ammunition:

Habíamos aprobado una Constitución que organizaba el poder político de forma cuasifederal. Luego no se podía pensar que desde el poder central, usando los aparatos de poder que había que desmontar, se podía tener un partido político. (...) Esto es absolutamente notorio, después de perder las elecciones municipales<sup>126</sup>.

With the difficulties involved in the restructuring of the State in 1979-80, this position gained credibility, and was an important issue in the organisational debate which arose in this period. This debate revolved around the question of the party's relationship with its social base, and the effects of the strategy of electoral competition followed by the UCD dominant coalition.

#### **4. Organisational expansion: A representative function?**

##### **4.1. Party growth as penetration**

The organisational developments within the party in the period following the 1979 elections were aimed at increasing the party membership whilst concentrating party authority around the Secretary General and party officials close to the President. In May, changes made to the General Secretariat confirmed this approach: the Secretariats of Youth and Economic Relations (held by a Christian Democrat and a Tácito) disappeared. The new General Secretariat was therefore almost exclusively formed by individuals close to the President and his team, and the Secretaries most associated with the more conservative faction were removed. Secretary General Arias Salgado's plans for the territorial expansion of the party, in line with the presidentialism of the party statutes, were aimed at eliminating traces of the coalitional origins of the UCD. This could be justified by the observation that the factions

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<sup>125</sup> See for example the headline "La izquierda y los nacionalistas dominan en los principales ayuntamientos", El País, 4 April 1979, p.1. For party control of provincial capitals and diputaciones in all 52 provinces, see Ramón Tamames, "Las elecciones municipales, segundo paso para la consolidación de la democracia", Historia de la transición, Op.cit., p.585.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

present in the parliamentary group had no real presence in the party's grass roots base, and that the vast majority of the party membership was happy to accept the authority of the party leadership: "después de las elecciones municipales, UCD es un partido suarista"<sup>127</sup>.

As well as Christian Democrats such as Oscar Alzaga, other UCD parliamentarians, particularly on the conservative wings of the party, were opposed to the plans of Arias Salgado. Miguel Herrero has lamented that "se fomentó la primacía del partido, es decir de su burocracia, sobre el grupo parlamentario e incluso sobre el Gobierno. Y se optó por una pesada organización directa de tipo territorial (...) que no resultaba adecuada para captar la afiliación y militancia socialmente más valiosa"<sup>128</sup>. The development of a mass membership in UCD was a source of controversy both for the organisational model it implied and for the way in which the operation was put into action. The municipal elections were used as a starting point from which to launch a campaign for mass membership, a long-term strategy aimed ultimately at cancelling out the factional nature of the party elite by the strength of numbers and close central control over recruitment. This, it was hoped, would lead to organisational entrenchment, making it difficult to dislodge the dominant coalition through the existing structures. The strategy for party growth was not unsuccessful, especially in areas where the local party had a close relationship with the apparatus. The extent of party affiliation in post-Franco Spain is difficult to calculate; all parties inflated their membership figures in an attempt to hide their fundamental organisational weakness<sup>129</sup>. This was certainly true in the case of UCD, whose official figures gave it 75,000 members in 1978, 85,621 in 1979, and 144,097 in 1981<sup>130</sup>. However, even accounting for this, these figures were more than acceptable in comparison with the membership of UCD's main rivals. In 1979 the PCE, the best-organised of the Spanish parties, claimed to have 200,000 members, whilst the real figure was probably around 160,000; the PSOE, which also claimed 200,000

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<sup>127</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>128</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., pp.180-1.

<sup>129</sup> Party membership in Spain was - and still is - much lower than in the established democracies in the rest of Europe. One author has estimated that in 1981 less than 500,000 Spaniards were members of political parties: see José Ramón Montero, "Partidos y participación política: Algunas notas sobre la afiliación política en la etapa inicial de la transición española", Op.cit., pp.33-72.

<sup>130</sup> Rafael Arias Salgado at First UCD Congress; Eduardo Espín, "Las fuerzas políticas concurrentes", in de Esteban/López Guerra, Las elecciones legislativas de 1979, Op.cit.; Rafael Calvo Ortega at Second UCD Congress.

members, had barely 100,000<sup>131</sup>. In this context, UCD was not so badly placed with around 60-70,000 members, which in the period 1979-81 must have exceeded 100,000 if the official figures are to be given minimal credit. The PSOE, after its election victory in 1982, gave the figure of 112,000<sup>132</sup>. This seems to suggest that UCD did manage to establish a real grass-roots organisational presence. Of course quantitative data on membership, as well as being unreliable, is no indication of the effectiveness of the party structures established. But this data shows that UCD was a rival to both the PSOE and the PCE in terms of numbers, although the activism of UCD members was unlikely to match that of the parties of the left<sup>133</sup>.

After the 1979 municipal elections UCD had a structure in place which permitted organisational growth: "una estructura bien enraizada en los pueblos a través de los concejales, los comités locales, los comités provinciales, técnicamente bien montada"<sup>134</sup>. Moreover, the highly centralised nature of the structure provided the instruments with which to control and coordinate this growth. In this sense, organisational expansion corresponded to the type of penetration discussed earlier. The central party apparatus sponsored the development of the party's territorial presence, with the objective of denying provincial leaders the freedom to act independently. Instead they were simply required to put into action decisions made by the central apparatus in Madrid:

El desarrollo organizativo de UCD fue por delegación del poder central: UCD era un partido nacional y centralizado. Era fundamentalmente la voluntad central que primaba y consiguientemente eso se traducía en una descentralización que no era política sino puramente administrativa. Las oficinas del partido en las provincias eran la representación del partido central en las provincias, claramente<sup>135</sup>.

Local power resources were thus controlled from the centre, constituting an efficient power

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<sup>131</sup> Montero, "Partidos y participación política", Op.cit., p.38.

<sup>132</sup> Hans-Juergen Puhle, "El PSOE: un partido predominante y heterogéneo", in Linz/Montero, Crisis y cambio, Op.cit., pp.289-344 (p.326).

<sup>133</sup> A reflection of this is that few of UCD's members paid their dues regularly: Iñigo Cavero, "La militancia de UCD", Op.cit., p.507.

<sup>134</sup> Interview B4.1.

<sup>135</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

apparatus for the execution of the decisions of the party leadership. All hierarchical levels of the party structure were subordinated to central authority, rather than to the level immediately above, thus eliminating rival centres of power<sup>136</sup>: for instance, a meeting planned by the UCD deputies in Andalusia to discuss the party's municipal strategy in that region was suspended by order of the Secretary General, anxious to prevent such a strategy escaping central control<sup>137</sup>. The periphery's dependency on the centre was accentuated by its lack of financial autonomy. The vast majority of the UCD membership rarely made financial contributions to the party, and as a result the provincial organisation relied on ad hoc payments made by the central apparatus: for instance in 1980, the Madrid provincial party, with 7,089 members, raised only 5,589,000 of the 9,600,000 pesetas required in members' dues. As a result of the provincial party's low membership and the missing dues, the deficit on running costs reached 22,816,000 pesetas, which was largely covered by transfers from the party's central headquarters<sup>138</sup>. Many other provinces faced similar problems<sup>139</sup>, which meant that the survival of party branches, and the salaries of party officials, depended on the favour of the central apparatus.

Naturally, given the strong influence of the State Administration in the creation of the party and the preparation of elections, the presence of the Movimiento Independents also contributed to the effective centralisation, and therefore coordination, of the organisation. A senior member of the Government confirms this:

El aparato de UCD tiene una fase donde se estructura y se organiza mejor, que es a partir de 1979, y entre 1979 y 1982 hay un aparato organizado (...); demasiado aparato, muy centralizado, y más administrativo que político, más de cumplimiento que de convicción política. El Secretario tiene el control del aparato del partido y hay un aparato además que en parte procede de los antiguos cuadros del Movimiento, que están acostumbrados a una estructura centralizada<sup>140</sup>.

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<sup>136</sup> "Secretaries in the provinces have direct contact with the secretary of organisation at the national level, (...) as a means of coordinating provincial activities" (Interview A37).

<sup>137</sup> "El comité ejecutivo de UCD trató sólo cuestiones de trámite", El País, 25 April 1979, p.14. Such suspensions were not envisaged in the party statutes or Organisational Rules (Reglamento de organización de UCD, UCD Secretaría General de Información, Madrid, 1979).

<sup>138</sup> UCD Madrid-Region, Memoria 1980, pp.12, 15-16.

<sup>139</sup> Interview with Iñigo Caverio, July 1992.

<sup>140</sup> Interview with Iñigo Caverio, July 1992.

Such an arrangement was so efficiently centralised as to be stifling of any initiative on the part of the party's peripheral base, and deliberately so. The rapid growth in party membership in the period 1978-80, whilst in line with the presidentialist strategy, was also a potential threat to the centralisation of party authority. Party officials elected in the Provincial Assemblies held in the summer of 1978 lost representativity, and therefore authority, as increases in membership changed the internal balance of power in some provincial organisations. An example of this was Oviedo, the scene of an almost permanent conflict between Christian Democrats (led by deputy Vega Escandón, displaced as Number One candidate in 1979 by Calvo Ortega) and Social Democrats (led by deputy García Pumariños, who won the battle for the provincial Presidency in 1979) for control of the provincial organisation. Conflicts of this type were often resolved by imposing central control, not always successfully. In May 1979, the Independent sector of the UCD Executive Committee in Granada had to request central intervention to resolve the long-running conflict between Social Democrats and Liberals in that province; an agreement was finally reached in October<sup>141</sup>. Greater problems were posed by the party organisation in Almería<sup>142</sup>, where the conflict divided conservative Christian Democrats and Independents. Here the intervention of the apparatus failed: the Secretary for Organisation ordered the suspension of the Provincial Assembly, but it still went ahead, with the election as provincial President of the Independent Senator Ponce García. The response of the apparatus was to invalidate this result, at which Ponce and the other UCD Senator Torres Rollón announced their intention to abandon UCD, joining the Partido Socialista Andaluz<sup>143</sup>. The subsequent decision to open disciplinary proceedings and expel the Senators from the party they had already left displayed the limits of central authority over provincial elites.

Another example of central intervention was in Madrid, where the resignation of the provincial President Luis Ortíz in May 1979 left the party with no leadership. A "comisión

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<sup>141</sup> See "Aumenta la pugna por la dirección de la UCD-Granada", *El País*, 26 May 1979, p.17; "Pacto en Granada", *Diario 16*, 2 October 1979, p.9.

<sup>142</sup> The provincial party with the highest membership in proportion to voters (see Table ), which had already shown its disconformity with the party leadership in the 1st National Congress. It has been suggested that these impressive membership figures were obtained through the affiliation of members of whole families of UCD militants (Iñigo Caverio, "La militancia de UCD", *Op.cit.*, p.506). This is an example of the destabilising effect of rapid organisational growth.

<sup>143</sup> "Invalidadas asambleas de UCD en Almería", *Diario 16*, 12 September 1979, p.5.

gestora" was created under the Presidency of Manuel Núñez, Secretary of Organisation and one of the key figures in the central party apparatus<sup>144</sup>, in order to prepare a Provincial Assembly for the election of a new Executive. Madrid was a particularly sensitive municipality for the party leadership because of the presence of José Luis Alvarez, a prominent Tácito, as leader of the UCD group in the City Council, a possible trampoline for a conservative challenge to Suárez's leadership<sup>145</sup>. An example of the suspicion with which the apparatus viewed the creation of rival centres of power is Arias Salgado's prompt suspension of a Press Conference which Alvarez had organised with all the UCD mayors of provincial capitals. Despite the efforts of Núñez to organise a comfortable election for Abel Cádiz, the candidate favoured by the apparatus, a close-run contest emerged between Cádiz and Armando de Benito. The final outcome of the Provincial Assembly in Madrid was disastrous: Cádiz won by 2 votes, but 3 votes for de Benito were declared spoiled by the President of the Assembly. Unsurprisingly, this aroused strong suspicions of vote-rigging, and after a furious protest de Benito's supporters refused to recognise the result<sup>146</sup>.

Organisational expansion directed from above could not impose uniformity where it did not exist, but in most cases the central apparatus was able to ensure obedience from the party's provincial branches. According to one critic, "se constituyeron unos comités provinciales que en bastantes casos no eran nada representativos, y que tenían la única virtud de garantizarle la mayoría al secretario general del partido"<sup>147</sup>. Given the coalitional origins of UCD, central control was inappropriate in those provinces where the factions had established a grass-roots presence, and where no particular group had a clear majority. More seriously, the factional distribution of power in the party Executive also had a reflection in UCD's territorial structures. This was the result of the electoral system used for the election of the Provincial Executive Committees, which established that the winning list would take the Presidency and Secretary and 70% of the Committee, whilst the rest would correspond

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<sup>144</sup> "Manuel Núñez, presidente de la comisión gestora de UCD-Madrid", *El País*, 26 April 1979, p.21.

<sup>145</sup> Miguel Herrero suggests that the UCD leadership deliberately neglected Alvarez's municipal campaign for this reason; *Memorias de estío*, Op.cit., p.185.

<sup>146</sup> See Huneus, *La Unión de Centro Democrático*, Op.cit., pp.268-271.

<sup>147</sup> Interview C65.

to the second-placed list<sup>148</sup>. This encouraged the division of the provincial party into two blocs:

Los militantes no estaban adscritos necesariamente a una de las tendencias (...). Pero hay una realidad más profunda que en los órganos de poder del partido funcionaron, de hecho, las cuotas de poder. (...) En el momento en que el I Congreso decide una candidatura única que tiene representantes de todos los sectores, eso en el fondo también se traslada a las provincias. Hay que tener en consideración el sistema electoral, que hace que todas las provincias se monten sobre la base de una mayoría del 75% y una minoría del 25%. Y la mayoría suele apoyar la idea de que solamente haya una UCD, y la representación visible de la UCD en la provincia es la persona que ha encabezado la lista mayoritaria<sup>149</sup>.

This was a way of ensuring an artificial majority where one did not exist already. The disadvantage of this system was that it encouraged a bipolar confrontation between factions, or coalitions of factions, present at national level. In most provinces the Independents were the strongest group, and therefore took the key posts on the provincial Executives. Faced with this majoritarian electoral system, there was a strong incentive for other groups to form alliances to contest the supremacy of the Independents, and at least achieve minority representation at provincial level. Although in many provinces pacts were achieved to avoid a divisive election, in others the result of this was factional conflict which mirrored the confrontations in the parliamentary and governmental elite between supporters of presidentialism and the barons pushing for factional autonomy.

As a means of ensuring a majority in the provincial base in favour of a presidentialist party, this system was effective. The majority of Provincial Secretaries did not belong to the original factions (see Table 4.8.), and had a cooperative - or even obedient - attitude in their dealings with the party apparatus. Only a tiny minority of party Provincial Executives were in the hands of the Christian Democrats and the Liberals, the main opponents of Suárez's project of hegemonisation. Given the centralisation of party authority around the apparatus, with the Provincial Secretaries merely implementing central decisions, a minority representation on the Provincial Executive left the losing factions with very little organisational influence. The electoral system threatened to institutionalise a polarisation

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<sup>148</sup> See UCD, Reglamento de Organización, Capítulo 3, Art.28 (pp.23-24).

<sup>149</sup> Interview C36.



between groups of provincial party representatives, with the risk that provincial leaders could seek the support and protection of the national factional leaders in order to wage parochial battles, whether of an ideological nature or not. This created a kind of "minority front", which imposed unity amongst dissident groups, making their challenge to the party leadership more potent. Therefore the majoritarian logic present in the functioning of the party organisation was to an extent counter-productive to the objective of overcoming factional divisions and achieving coherence through majority imposition.

#### 4.2. Organisational tensions: Party bureaucratisation vs. social participation

The presence of factional representatives in the parliamentary group counter-balanced the effectiveness of centralised control through malleable Provincial Secretaries, and contributed to the extension of the factional dynamic to the party base. Naturally, parliamentarians opposed to the presidentialisation of the party could use their status and prestige in their provinces to mount challenges to the legitimacy of the provincial Executives. This was complicated by the differences in political and professional background between parliamentarians and provincial party officials. The conspicuous presence of ex-Movimiento Independents in the party apparatus threatened to polarise the provincial party elite between ex-Francoist functionaries and parliamentarians from the tolerated opposition to Franco. According to one former opponent of the regime:

Normalmente éramos en las provincias la segunda mayoría, y el primer núcleo era la gente que venía del régimen anterior. Estos eran políticos profesionales, no tenían otra profesión, y eran muy duros en las luchas políticas porque se jugaban todo. Para nosotros la política tenía un componente altruista, para ellos era una profesión, por lo tanto en UCD convivíamos en UCD gente que veía la política de forma en el fondo muy distinta<sup>150</sup>.

However it is an exaggeration to suggest that the party apparatus was controlled by the ex-cadres of the dictatorship. Out of 52 Provincial Secretaries elected in 1978, 32 were Independents, but only 18 of these had participated in either a political or administrative capacity in the Franco regime (although this is not to say that the others did not have some

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<sup>150</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

kind of link)<sup>151</sup>. There were also cases of Francoist influence amongst the other factions: the Provincial Secretary of Guadalajara, the Christian Democrat Luis de Grandes Pascual, was the brother of the last Francoist mayor of the provincial capital, Agustín de Grandes Pascual. Moreover, the Secretary General controlling the party was himself a veteran of the tolerated opposition to Franco, and had no record of political involvement in the Franco regime. There is also objective data to deny the thesis of a massive incorporation of functionaries from the Movimiento Nacional; a statistical study of the professional background of UCD members reveals that only 18,239 (13.1%) were State functionaries<sup>152</sup>.

A more significant difference was the tension between organisational allegiances. By 1979, the UCD organisation had begun the process of consolidation and entrenchment, in the sense of the creation of a bureaucracy and a formal structure. The efforts of Arias Salgado to establish a professionalised party administration met with a degree of success. According to one party official, in 1978 the central party apparatus in Madrid had around 150 part- and full-time employees, whilst the provincial organisations had five or six employees each, which multiplied by 52 adds a further 250-300<sup>153</sup>. These numbers were probably an exaggeration - even the PSOE, generally recognised as having a strong apparatus, had only 250 full-time employees in 1984 - but UCD certainly had a significant paid staff. This meant that one important criterion for organisational entrenchment was in large part satisfied:

Hubo una cierta burocratización. Fue un aparato modesto, pero había que sostener también a todas las delegaciones provinciales. (...) Fue generalmente un aparato bien integrado, donde había funciones diversas, pero nunca llegó a estar tan solidificado como está el del PSOE<sup>154</sup>.

The creation of a professionalised party bureaucracy acts as a force for the maintenance of the organisation and its dominant coalition, as a result of the economic dependency of party functionaries, who have a powerful interest in the internal status quo<sup>155</sup>. A former UCD

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<sup>151</sup> Biographies of members of the UCD Political Council, in UCD, *La solución a un reto*, Op.cit., pp.98-140.

<sup>152</sup> The biggest groups were farmers and farm-workers (19.1%) and house-wives (11.7%): Iñigo Cavero, "La militancia de UCD", Op.cit.

<sup>153</sup> Interview A37.

<sup>154</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>155</sup> See Panebianco, *Political parties*, Op.cit.

Secretary General offers an insight into the consequences of this development:

Dentro del Secretariado de UCD había personas que probablemente en el mercado de trabajo, era el sitio donde encontraban una oportunidad que igual no encontraban en otro sitio. Eso crea dentro de UCD una especie de estructura profesional, que se agarra a mantener el aparato de poder como sea, porque además está profesionalizada. y tiene un gran temor a lo que pueda pasar si se desmorona el partido<sup>156</sup>.

The UCD also achieved some degree of formalisation as an organisation, consistent with the process of consolidation. With regard to one measure of this - the homogeneity of organisational structures at local levels - UCD again appears to have been developing as an institution. The party organisation established in 1978-79 consisted of "una base sólida de comités locales" - 2864 by May 1981<sup>157</sup> - and the establishment of a party Secretariat in each province. The methods of election and functions of provincial governing bodies were established by the party statutes<sup>158</sup> and applied in each province, although with differing results. In line with the Secretary General's organisational strategy, this party structure was prepared in order to act as an "electoral machine", seeking out attractive candidates and supporting their campaigns:

La maquinaria fundamental era una organización central con secretarías provinciales y sectoriales, y había un reflejo de esa organización en todas las provincias (...); una parte era financiada con cargo a los presupuestos del partido, de tal manera que se podía hablar de una estructura organizada permanente, profesionalizada en la medida en que percibía una retribución del partido por la función que desempeñaba. En todo ese tiempo la gente fue aprendiendo una profesión, que es la de ser funcionario de un partido, y por tanto parte de una organización, que tiene como objetivo transmitir un mensaje y captar unos votos<sup>159</sup>.

The formal homogeneity of UCD's territorial organisation was easily achieved through the centralised control of the process of party expansion, which meant that the provincial party

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<sup>156</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>157</sup> Data from UCD Secretariat of Organisation, in Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.237.

<sup>158</sup> UCD, La solución a un reto, Op.cit., pp.363-392.

<sup>159</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

was simply a delegation of the central apparatus, with the sole exception of Catalonia<sup>160</sup>. Regional and provincial party congresses were held after the national congress ("en cascada") in order to ensure that the example set centrally could be reproduced at other levels<sup>161</sup>.

The structural formalisation of the organisation was not reflected in the activity and functioning of these structures. The statutory requirements for meetings of the various party governing bodies were widely flouted, the tone being set by the irregularity with which Suárez called meetings of the Executive Committee and Political Council<sup>162</sup>. As one Liberal leader complained in 1979,

No es aventurado afirmar que UCD, con la sola salvedad del Congreso, no ha funcionado como partido, ni ha puesto en práctica la mecánica interna que prescriben sus estatutos. (...) El carácter "presidencialista", bajo el cual se explica oficiosamente la inmovilidad de la maquinaria del partido, es un eufemismo carente de contenido que no justifica por sí solo cuanto sucede<sup>163</sup>.

This was almost certainly the intention of the party leadership. The improvised creation of UCD for the 1977 elections, and the development of the territorial organisation in line with electoral deadlines, encouraged the conception of the party's role as an electoral machine. Given the difficulties involved in governing during the transition period, and the need for the UCD government to give priority to general questions of national interest rather than defending the interests of any particular section of the electorate, the emergence of a vibrant and autonomous party organisation was not the party leadership's immediate priority.

In spite of the informality of the UCD's internal functioning, the emergence of an albeit sclerotic bureaucracy did favour the party's consolidation. The extraordinary dependency of the provincial organisation on the central Secretariat created a powerful organisational allegiance amongst local officials. The same, however, could not be said of UCD parliamentarians. Whilst the livelihood of UCD central and provincial officials depended

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<sup>160</sup> Here UCD merged with the Catalan section of the Equipo de la Democracia Cristiana, led by Antón Cañellas.

<sup>161</sup> Pilar Gangas, El desarrollo organizativo de los partidos políticos españoles de implantación nacional, Doctoral thesis, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1994, p.77.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p.81.

<sup>163</sup> Antonio Papell, Ideas para un partido de centro, Op.cit., p.95.

on the favour of the apparatus in Madrid, and the general health of the organisation, UCD parliamentarians owed their seats to the bargaining process in which Suárez and the barons engaged at election time. As a result, the allegiances of many of these parliamentarians, rather than with the party organisation, lay with the factional leaders who had pushed for their inclusion in the lists in negotiations with Suárez. It follows that they did not have the same level of dependency on the UCD leadership as the party's paid officials. More importantly, parliamentarians from the original coalitional parties were aware of the threat represented by the development of the presidentialist party, and this created tensions at provincial level:

A los secretarios provinciales, que son personas profesionalizadas políticamente dentro del partido, se les da un apoyo muy importante compensatorio frente a la autonomía de los diputados. Entonces hay una tensión permanente entre los cuadros de organización de las provincias y los diputados que representan al partido en la provincia (...). Entonces los diputados se quejan de que cada vez que vuelven a sus provincias, los secretarios provinciales, que aspiran a ser diputados, les van segando la hierba (...). Los diputados vienen irritados a Madrid, y a veces represalian al partido con sus abstenciones, porque se sienten poco protegidos por el partido, porque el aparato del partido protege a los secretarios provinciales, que consideran más leales y fieles<sup>164</sup>.

It cannot have escaped the notice of UCD parliamentarians from the Christian Democrat and Liberal factions - those least willing to accept presidential authority - that these developments left them increasingly exposed at both national and provincial level. A successful hegemonisation of the party organisation through the establishment of a loyal, non-factional local and provincial elite would enable the party leadership to marginalise them from the centres of power, and possibly exclude them from the UCD lists in future elections. The unease of sectors of the parliamentary group was therefore driven in part by the instinct for political survival.

Criticism of this strategy for party development was also made on grounds of organisational effectiveness, and not only by Suárez's opponents. The principal complaint was that this party model was isolated from its social base, and that the tight central control of party expansion blocked the access of new members, and in particular organised groups, which could have established a closer relationship between the party and its electorate. According to one Christian Democrat critic:

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<sup>164</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

Rechazaron el apoyo de cualquier infraestructura social preexistente, porque de alguna manera, eso podría condicionar el poder de Adolfo Suárez. (...) Porque no se quería montar un partido, se quería montar un seudopartido, se quería garantizar el control en cada una de las provincias, con un núcleo de personas que se apoyaban en los restos del Movimiento Nacional (...). Por tanto, si se producía la incorporación de otros sectores sociales (...) inmediatamente eran desbordados y quedaban en minoría. Luego la forma de garantizar que no se produjera ese desbordamiento, era no aceptar a toda esta gente<sup>165</sup>.

One member of the Secretariat confirmed that in some areas the presence of Movimiento veterans acted as a brake on the party's penetration of the social fabric:

La elección de los candidatos que preparamos a las elecciones municipales fue el punto dónde se decantó el éxito o el fracaso en cada provincia. En las provincias en que se seleccionaron buenos candidatos (...) hemos aumentado enormemente la militancia. (...) En las provincias donde los candidatos eran continuistas del antiguo sistema (...) hemos tenido dificultades de implantación del partido<sup>166</sup>.

The stifling centralisation of the party bureaucracy and the presence in some areas of ex-Francoist functionaries limited the UCD provincial organisation to the role of an "electoral machine". This structure was efficient enough at drawing up lists for local elections and preparing election campaigns, but was incapable of giving UCD a real social presence which could establish commitments with its electoral base, and act as "correa de transmisión". The limitations of the provincial structures also reaffirmed the predominance of the central party apparatus: "toda la labor de penetración había que hacerla desde la sede central, porque la sede regional no actuaba sobre el tejido social"<sup>167</sup>. Indeed one study of the relationship between emerging parties and civil society in one Spanish province found that whilst the PSOE, and to a lesser extent the PCE was perceived as encouraging citizens to participate in politics, the UCD was seen as hindering this participation<sup>168</sup>. The fundamental characteristic of the organisational apparatus set in place in 1978-80 was that it was at the service of the Government and its President, and acquired an important role at election time by helping the

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<sup>165</sup> Interview B2.

<sup>166</sup> Interview B4.1.

<sup>167</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>168</sup> José Cazorla Pérez, Manuel Bonachela Mesas and Juan López Domech, "Demandas sociales y partidos políticos en España", Revista de Estudios Políticos, 23, septiembre-octubre 1981. pp.73-152 (pp.109-111).

President to transmit his campaign message to the electorate. It did not, however, permit a flow of information in the other direction, since the party's local base limited itself to executing central instructions, and was not characterised by a vigorous representative activity.

This meant that the party organisation's only role was to mobilise short-term support at elections, rather than consolidating the party's social base, and still acting as a channel for UCD voters to express "voice" before withdrawing their vote. This model can be described as the logic of electoral competition taken to extreme lengths. The President's principal link with social demands was the work of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, run by UCD members such as the *suarista* Juan Díez Nicolás, and the Christian Democrat Rafael López Pintor, which provided him with survey and opinion poll data. Representative links were regarded as limitations on the President's freedom of action; instead the charismatic leadership of Adolfo Suárez was the main source of electoral support. The organisational point of reference for the UCD social base was in fact the State administration, and in particular the Government, rather than the party:

Hoy, las fuerzas sociales se entienden con el partido a través del Gobierno, hecho perjudicial para todos, porque consideran con sobrada razón, que la base del partido e incluso su cuadros parlamentarios, (...) carecían de toda capacidad de acción sobre el poder gubernamental de ese mismo partido<sup>169</sup>.

This was largely a deliberate strategy. Arias Salgado's vision of party development implied that the Government and Presidency, at least in the short term, should be the motor of organisational expansion. In part this was a result of the difficulties of creating a political party whilst governing a sensitive transition period:

El modelo burocrático de la organización del partido era (...) un requisito esencial para poder comparecer en las elecciones, pero trasladaba al futuro la organización de partidos abiertos, en los que los militantes tuvieran un amplio margen de libertad. El modelo burocrático autoritario (...) no es bueno. Es una fórmula útil para un proceso de construcción, tanto del propio partido como de las instituciones democráticas, pero es un sistema muy pobre, muy cerrado sobre sí mismo, y que produce una desconexión entre el partido y los movimientos de la opinión pública<sup>170</sup>.

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<sup>169</sup> Miguel Herrero, "¿A dónde va UCD?", lecture given in the Club Siglo XXI, 20 January 1981; reproduced in *Ideas para moderados*, Op.cit., pp.43-53 (p.46).

<sup>170</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

The difficulties of managing a consociational<sup>171</sup> transition - which involves elites filtering and containing the demands of the social groups they represent - made the creation of a fully open and democratic party potentially destabilising. However the vulnerability of the "bureaucratic authoritarian" party was its failure to establish a fluid contact with its social base, and particularly with influential organisations which could help mobilise support. UCD's electoral strategy had to strike a delicate balance between the visible representation of the interests of the party's electorate, and the subordination of these interests to the general interests of the State and its institutions. UCD, because of the demands of the transition, but also because of Suárez's unwillingness to tie himself to social interests, chose to avoid clear commitments to any distinct sector of the electorate. This made it difficult to consolidate the party's electoral support<sup>172</sup>, and left it dangerously exposed to defeat in the event of the leader's popular touch failing him. It is difficult to see how this problem could have been avoided without hindering the process of consensus-building necessary for democratic consolidation. Indeed it was no coincidence that conservatives such as Herrero and Alzaga were also unconvinced of the benefits of inter-party consensus. Moreover it did not help that those sectors pushing for close ties with external organisations did so with the open intention of transforming UCD into a clearly right-wing party.

Obviously Suárez's electoral strategy, aimed at competing with the PSOE for the centre electorate whilst maintaining the support of more conservative sectors of society, had to satisfy the demands of conservative sectors up to a point, otherwise their support would be lost. In the absence of lines of communication with secondary organisations, Adolfo Suárez's situational charisma - his popularity as the man who resolved the crisis of State provoked by Franco's death - was an indispensable source of electoral support. This placed enormous responsibility on the leader's shoulders, as the only interpreter of the UCD electorate's interests. The principal weakness of this strategy was the unsuitability of Adolfo

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<sup>171</sup> A definition used by Huneus, in "La transición a la democracia en España. Dimensiones de una política consociacional", in Julián Santamaría (comp.), Transición a la democracia en el sur de Europa y América Latina, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1982, pp.243-286. Although I have argued earlier that the use of the concept is inappropriate for the study of the internal dynamic of UCD, it is an effective tool for the analysis of the transition process as a whole.

<sup>172</sup> See Juan Linz, "A century of politics and interests in Spain", in Suzanne Berger (ed.), Organising interests in Western Europe, Op.cit., p.398. Interestingly, Linz argues that UCD's inability to connect with its social base diminished the party's populist, centre-left character, rather than enhancing it. This argument suggests that the fear of a conservative take-over was not the only reason behind Suárez's lack of interest in support organisations.



Suárez to act in accordance with the responsibilities corresponding to his role as President. Suárez's reluctance to establish a party organisation with deep roots in society, capable of acquiring institutional commitments to particular social interests was also the result of his leadership style, which was highly personalised. According to Arias Salgado, Suárez "no se mueve cómodamente en estructuras organizadas, porque se siente limitado y condicionado, no potenciado"<sup>173</sup>. Another of Suárez's ministers confirmed this,

Adolfo Suárez confiaba más en sí mismo, en su carisma, en su dominio de la televisión, en su simpatía desbordante, que en la base sustentadora de una organización política. (...) Suárez sentía en 1976 y en 1977 el apoyo directo de los ciudadanos, que le llegaba sin el intermedio de un partido<sup>174</sup>.

Suárez appeared to conceive his charismatic leadership as being independent of the articulation and aggregation of social interests. At no stage did he elaborate any detailed political programme or vision which could serve as a basis for organised political action. This attitude acted as a brake on the organisational development of the party:

Uno de los defectos de UCD es que internamente, sobre todo en la cúpula no hubo quizá una voluntad de estructuración muy firme. Suárez temía el partido, no quería crear un partido político como una estructura firme establecida en la sociedad, no tenía esa experiencia y esa formación y consiguientemente él en el fondo siempre pensaba en el Gobierno (...). Y eso naturalmente tendía a disminuir la importancia del aparato, y consiguientemente del partido. El aparato estaba claramente subordinado a las necesidades del Gobierno<sup>175</sup>.

The fact that the leadership on which the party depended was itself largely the consequence of an exceptional combination of circumstances was a serious threat to the organisation's survival. The centralised structures established by Arias Salgado facilitated the President's domination of the party bureaucracy and the territorial arena of party activity. However the coherence of the parliamentary elite, and the maintenance of electoral support, were very much dependent on the President and his dominant position in the transition process.

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<sup>173</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>174</sup> Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., pp.55-56.

<sup>175</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

## 5. Conclusion

Whilst UCD was far from being a fully institutionalised party, by 1979-80 important steps had been taken to create an organisational structure with a number of features favourable to its consolidation. Autonomy from secondary organisations was maintained, and the establishment of a highly centralised chain of authority left most of the responsibility for the definition of the party's political objectives to the President. The organisational strategy which emerged out of the 1st UCD Congress was to impose presidential authority on the parliamentary factions by building a local base which would respond to the central leadership of the party, and in particular the President himself. In this way the factions, only present in the parliamentary elite of the party and lacking the organisational capacity to maintain a significant territorial presence, would be outmanoeuvred and unable to condition the leadership's autonomy. The distribution of organisational incentives and benefits to the party membership, from the elite to the grass-roots, would be controlled by the Presidency, without the mediation of the factional leaders.

However this strategy, successful in establishing concrete organisational structures, did not succeed in stamping out the divisive origins of the party:

Se decía que todos éramos lo mismo, que las familias no tenían importancia, (...) y lo que se hizo es que los directivos del partido se pensaron en función de cuotas que derivaban precisamente de las familias ideológicas, para lo cual había que tener tantos social demócratas, tantos democristianos, tantos liberales, tantos independientes. Y eso yo creo que fue, en el primer congreso, la gran ocasión perdida, que llevó como consecuencia que, a pesar de que formalmente UCD era un partido unitario, nunca lo fue. UCD funcionó de hecho hacia adentro como una coalición, por así decirlo, como una federación de familias, que tenían que conseguir ventajas para sus miembros<sup>176</sup>.

It can be hypothesised that these divisions would ultimately have been overcome had the process of presidentialisation been allowed to run its course, and particularly if Suárez had been able to use his electoral dominance to purge the party of its more troublesome elite members. However this was not done, and the presidentialist strategy was left with two important weaknesses. First, its failure to enter into contact with a social base, and the corresponding dependence on a quasi-charismatic leadership for electoral mobilisation.

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<sup>176</sup> Interview C36.

Second, the centralisation of organisational authority around the party leader, despite the factional divisions in the parliamentary elite, and the exceptional and unstable nature of the leader's control over key zones of uncertainty. This control rested largely on Suárez's pivotal role in the transition process, and the convergence between sub-groups around the goal of a democratic Constitution. Suárez's dominance over his party was functional to the resolution of the national political crisis in 1977-79, and the success of his Governments in achieving political reform - the primary objective of all the UCD sub-groups - made the creation of a highly centralised organisation possible. After the passing of the Constitution, it was not clear that sufficient collective incentives could be distributed to all these groups; the lack of ideological clarity described earlier marked the leadership's failure to provide the party with a new common purpose after November 1978. Moreover, no efficient formal structures for sub-group bargaining over party objectives had been developed; instead the organisational rules established in 1978 proved totally inadequate in the period after the 1979 elections. The inability of UCD to overcome these weaknesses is the subject of the remainder of this research. Agreement over a democratic Constitution did not imply agreement over State intervention in the economy or private religious schooling, issues which divided the UCD parliamentary group. These disagreements suggested the need for organisational "voice" - formal channels for factional bargaining - in order to maintain the flow of collective benefits to the parliamentary sub-groups.



## **CHAPTER 5: LEADERSHIP FAILURE AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MODEL**

### **1. Introduction**

The fragility of the sources of interdependency and cooperation between UCD's component groups was exposed after the 1979 elections as the party entered a situation of leadership crisis. As a result intense conflict emerged in the UCD Government, the parliamentary groups, and in some cases in the provincial organisation, resulting in the emergence of an internal opposition and the resignation of Adolfo Suárez as party leader. This Chapter aims to explain how the achievement of the party's principal shared objective, and the failures of the 3rd UCD Government, put an end to the situational charisma enjoyed by Suárez since late 1976. The impact of this crisis on the relationship between the leadership and the party factions is then explored.

### **2. The First Legislature<sup>1</sup>: From consensus to competition**

#### **2.1. UCD in the Spanish party system after April 1979**

The stability of Suárez's leadership position was undermined by the aftermath of the 1979 municipal and legislative elections, which brought significant changes to UCD's political environment. Although in terms of votes little changed, the end of the constituent period marked a profound change in the dynamic of the party system, and in particular in the strategy of the main opposition party. The constituent consensus had been relatively easy for the PSOE's leaders to justify to its membership, given the threat of residual elements of Francoism, and the general atmosphere of cooperation and moderation generated by the process. But after a disappointing defeat in the legislative elections, the PSOE leadership could no longer sustain such a strategy. Consensus deprived the PSOE of a role as opposition party, making it difficult for the Socialists to present themselves as a meaningful alternative

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<sup>1</sup> The First Legislature of the new constitutional democracy: 1979-1982.

to UCD<sup>2</sup>. The alliance between the left parties in the municipal elections marked a change in strategy on the part of the PSOE, and gave the left joint control over a number of cities. This emphasised the vulnerability of UCD's position as a minority Government in the event of a similar strategy being followed at national level.

The municipal elections therefore marked a turning-point in the nature of electoral competition in the new democracy. The close cooperation between UCD and PSOE in 1977-78, which had confirmed Suárez's status within UCD as the best available leader for the constituent negotiations, came to an end. The PSOE attacked UCD more forcefully than in the general election campaign<sup>3</sup>, and the equilibrium which had made consensus possible was broken by the near-collapse of Coalición Democrática (the coalition formed between Fraga's AP, Alfonso Osorio and José María de Areilza), which left UCD with no apparent rival on the right. This allowed the PSOE to present UCD as the party of the powerful and wealthy:

En España se ha terminado el centro. Hay derecha. No hay nada en el panorama político español que represente a la derecha más que UCD. (...) En menos de dos años el proceso ha sido clarificador. Llegadas las elecciones de 1979, surge la derecha real, la derecha de los poderes económicos, sociales, religiosos, etc, y decide utilizar la UCD para su cobertura<sup>4</sup>.

The PSOE's strategy was to present UCD as a conservative party in order to challenge its dominance of the political centre, the key to electoral success. UCD was particularly sensitive to such an offensive: the (momentary) disappearance of AP-CD<sup>5</sup> made it difficult to present UCD as the party of the centre, and attempts by AP-CD to integrate itself into the governmental majority threatened a switch in the balance of power within the party in favour

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<sup>2</sup> Jordi Capo Giol, "Estrategias para un sistema de partidos", Revista de Estudios Políticos, 23, September-October 1981, pp.153-167 (p.158).

<sup>3</sup> "Felipe: 'Se van a enterar de lo que es la oposición'", Diario 16, 16 March 1979, p.7. Already on the publication of the legislative election results González had refused to congratulate Suárez because of the "dishonesty" of his campaign ("Felipe González: 'El PSOE pasa a una oposición crítica y no destructiva'", El País, 4 March 1979, p.11).

<sup>4</sup> Luis Solana, "Ya no hay centro", El País, 18 March 1979, p.14.

<sup>5</sup> AP-CD withdrew most of its candidates from the municipal elections, and in many areas, including Madrid, supported the UCD's candidates.

of the conservative wing<sup>6</sup>.

In this more competitive context, the First Legislature was dominated by the Government's search for stable parliamentary support. UCD's failure to obtain an absolute majority had been a minor problem in the Constituent Legislature, as the bulk of legislation had the support of most of the Chamber. The increasingly uncooperative attitude of the PSOE after March 1979 left the UCD Government vulnerable to parliamentary defeat unless further support could be found. But although UCD was only 8 votes short of a majority, the price of those votes was high. A parliamentary pact between UCD and the right would have fallen in line with the PSOE's strategy for conquering the centre-ground, which was given a new impulse by the manoeuvre of Felipe González in the summer of 1979 to force the abandonment of the Socialists' formal commitment to Marxism<sup>7</sup>. On the other hand, parliamentary agreements with the regionalist groups would be equally costly because of the imminent passage of the Statutes of Autonomy.

These difficulties were evident in the preparation of Suárez's investiture as President. As in the previous legislature, Suárez had to negotiate the support of other groups in order to pass through on the first vote with majority support. To obtain this support, concrete political demands would have to be satisfied, and given that the development of the Constitution required the clarification in one or another political direction of the ambiguities contained in it, this would imply associating UCD with certain defined policies, which would condition the distribution of collective incentives to the party members. For instance, CD offered its investiture vote and subsequent parliamentary support to UCD "si abandona las ambigüedades de su gestión anterior y sus concesiones a la izquierda. (...) Es nuestra intención facilitar el camino a Adolfo Suárez para que pueda hacer una política de derechas sin concesiones"<sup>8</sup>. AP's 9 seats would give UCD a majority, but a majority which required

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<sup>6</sup> "Los consejos de UCD condicionan la decisión de CD en Madrid", *El País*, 15 March 1979, p.21. According to this newspaper, the UCD candidate for Mayor of Madrid, José Luis Alvarez (a Tàcito on the most conservative wing of the party), cooperated closely with CD in deciding how best to combat the left in the municipal campaign.

<sup>7</sup> González and Guerra resigned after the 28th PSOE Congress failed to abandon Marxism, forcing an Extraordinary Congress in which they imposed their will; see Hans-Juergen Puhle, "El PSOE: un partido predominante y heterogéneo", in Linz and Montero, *Crisis y cambio*, Op.cit., pp.289-344 (pp.335-337); Preston, *The triumph of democracy in Spain*, Op.cit., pp.154-7.

<sup>8</sup> "Coalición Democrática apoyará a UCD sin exigir contrapartidas", *El País*, 8 March 1979, p.13.

it to follow an openly conservative strategy, and abandon the undefined centre. This would have caused serious internal tensions, probably provoking the desertion of Social Democrat parliamentarians. Suárez, who wanted an ample majority of between 190 and 200 votes, also attempted to negotiate the support of the regionalist parties *Convergència i Unió* (8 seats), the *Partido Socialista de Andalucía* (5 seats) and the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (7 seats). These parties were explicit in their intentions: their Statutes of Autonomy must reach the highest level of self-government in the shortest time, leaving behind the ambiguity of the Eighth Title of the Constitution<sup>9</sup>.

This is a good example of the dynamic of bilateral opposition which characterised UCD's parliamentary environment after the end of consensus. The support of CD would threaten UCD's image as a democratic and progressive party, and was incompatible with concessions to the regionalists or consensus with the PSOE<sup>10</sup>. The support of any one regionalist group in return for increased autonomy would destabilise the whole delicate autonomy process. This situation was not the result of any particular change in the parliamentary strength of the major parties (although the regionalists' representation had grown in 1979); instead it was largely due to the end of the constituent process and the corresponding change of attitude of the PSOE. The new Socialist strategy of frontal opposition to UCD was apparent from the opening of the new Legislature, in the row over the investiture procedure. Suárez charged the new President of the Congress, Landelino Lavilla, with finding a suitable reglamentary interpretation in order to avoid a parliamentary debate on the investiture, a move bitterly opposed by the PSOE<sup>11</sup>. The main party of the opposition went as far as questioning the legality of the new Government, insisting on a debate in which the new Ministers would outline their plans.

This situation presented UCD with a strategic dilemma. Adolfo Suárez's leadership style, based upon arbitration between the more radical elements on the left and right,

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<sup>9</sup> See for example the statement of Xabier Arzallus reported in *Diario 16*, "Los Estatutos de Autonomía condicionan la mayoría UCD", 7 March 1979, p.11.

<sup>10</sup> CD offered parliamentary support "para que UCD no se vea obligada a pactar con grupos minoritarios que pueden exigirle contraprestaciones perjudiciales para los intereses generales del país" ("Coalición Democrática apoyará a UCD sin exigir contrapartidas", cit.), and Fraga's hostility to regional autonomy (later to soften dramatically) was well-known.

<sup>11</sup> Suárez received the votes of UCD, CD, PSA, PAR (Partido Regional Aragonés) and UPN (Unión del Pueblo Navarro), and CiU abstained. The PNV voted against.



promoting dialogue and reconciliation, was no longer appropriate in the political context of 1979. In the constituent negotiations UCD had often sacrificed its own substantive proposals in favour of a mediation between the demands of conservatives, Socialists and regionalists. This strategy also had the advantage of avoiding internal conflict over UCD's position on the more controversial sections of the constitutional text. As seen in Chapter 3, this approach was opposed by the UCD right, who demanded a more distinctive UCD contribution to the constitutional text (understood as a conservative contribution). These demands could be ignored in the constituent period on the grounds of maintaining relations with the PSOE, but after the declared end of consensus this pretext was less convincing. The new environment required a different kind of leadership, and a more positive definition of the party's political space and its policy preferences, in order to respond to the PSOE's assumption of the role of opposition. But this meant choosing between conflicting demands within the party, and therefore reducing the flow of benefits to some party factions in favour of others.

Instead, the UCD leader did not react to this change in its electoral environment. The refusal to unveil a programme showed that Suárez's strategy was to maintain as much flexibility as possible in parliamentary strategy: "el Gobierno buscará para cada ley el acuerdo con alguna fuerza que le permitiera lograr la mayoría, sin que ésta tuviera un diseño estable"<sup>12</sup>. The statement released by the first meeting of the UCD Executive Committee after the elections offered no modification of the party strategy followed in the first legislature:

UCD manifiesta inequívocamente su voluntad de realizar una acción política desde la moderación, presidida por un espíritu de servicio a la totalidad de los españoles, asumiendo todas las responsabilidades que le incumben derivadas del mandato popular y en el respeto a todas las fuerzas políticas. UCD asume como objetivo irrenunciable el continuar con la tarea de desarrollar y consolidar las libertades y las instituciones democráticas definidas en la Constitución<sup>13</sup>.

This was not totally misguided. Many of the laws of "constitutional development" required a "política de Estado", going beyond party politics:

Hay una serie de leyes, que hay que sacarlas por consenso entre las grandes fuerzas políticas, porque son leyes

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<sup>12</sup> Capó Giol, "Estrategia para un sistema de partidos", Op.cit., p.162.

<sup>13</sup> "UCD favorecerá la modificación del reglamento del Congreso", El País, 4 March 1979, p.12.

permanentes. (...) Si no, no hay manera de hacer nunca una sociedad integrada. La Ley del Divorcio, las leyes de educación, las leyes reguladoras del poder judicial, esos son leyes que deben tener una vigencia de 25, 30 años, porque son auténticas leyes institucionales, que deben permanecer vigentes al margen de los partidos políticos<sup>14</sup>.

The problem with such a strategy was that it made UCD dependent on the willingness of other political groups to cooperate generously in the task of constitutional development, but without any formal agreement for the legislature, allowing parliamentary rivals to exact a high price for their votes. In particular, a majority formed by UCD and other small parliamentary forces such as CD-AP or CiU was insufficient for much of the legislation planned for this period; the acceptance of the PSOE was required too. But as one senior party official explained, the end of the constituent period signalled a change in the political atmosphere which made cooperation with the PSOE difficult:

Fue un clamor general de la opinión pública, y un poco orquestado por los medios de comunicación, de que la política del consenso era para el período constituyente, pero que a partir de ahí, cada uno tenía que ocupar su lugar. El planteamiento era correcto, ya que creo que se puede confundir al electorado cuando hay constantemente negociación (...) Pero de ahí a no consensuar nada y a bofetada limpia, tampoco<sup>15</sup>.

The tension between the need to maintain an element of consensus and the pressures from both the opposition and conservative sectors of UCD to abandon it placed Suárez and the 3rd UCD Government in a difficult position. Apart from its parliamentary weakness, which left it exposed to opposition pressures, the Government faced the problem of having to define policy itself, instead of mediating between the pre-established positions of other political forces. This meant that the ideological and policy divisions within UCD - and by extension the internal debate on electoral and organisational strategy - would have to be addressed. This was made more difficult by the failure of the 1st UCD Congress to establish any coherent party doctrine. The centralisation of party authority around the President implied that Suárez himself should take the lead in defining UCD's policy positions and parliamentary and electoral strategy, as the only party authority fully legitimised to do so. Suárez's failure to adequately resolve this problem and distribute collective incentives is at the root of the

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<sup>14</sup> Interview C46.

<sup>15</sup> Interview B4.

decline of his leadership, and of the conflict within UCD which emerged in this period.

## 2.2. The limits of presidentialism: Governing without the barons

Suárez's failure to adapt to changing leadership requirements had particularly damaging consequences for party cohesion because of the increasing presidentialisation of control over the organisation. The Government named by Suárez in April 1979 was an example of this strategy for the management of the party. Such important barons as Martín Villa, Fernández Ordóñez and Pío Cabanillas were excluded from the Cabinet, Joaquín Garrigues was relegated to Minister without Portfolio, and Alvarez de Miranda, replaced as President of the Congress by Landelino Lavilla, was left without any senior post. This was part of the attempt to overcome the coalitional origins of UCD by concentrating powers around the party leader, as a presidential source confirms: "aquella fue una apuesta en el sentido de jugar a fondo la carta de UCD-partido: no familias, sino partido"<sup>16</sup>. It also demonstrates the extent of the centralisation of political resources around the President after the 1979 election victory; the barons did not feel strong enough to respond immediately to this affront.

The new Government did respond to an extent to the parliamentary strength of the different factions, with the Liberals and the Social Democrats improving their representation, and the Tácitos losing the over-representation they had enjoyed in the 2nd UCD Government (see Table 5.1.). As in the previous Cabinets the Social Democrats had a strong presence in the economic ministries (holding Industry and Commerce), under the direction of Fernando Abril, in whom Suárez had delegated full powers over economic policy. The Ministry of the Presidency, occupied by a close collaborator of Suárez from the Partido Popular, Pérez Llorca, was given extended powers, some of which were taken from the Ministries of Justice and Education<sup>17</sup>. But the presidentialist logic of concentrating power among Suárez's closest allies did not completely replace the coalitional style of government formation. In particular, Education was divided into two ministries - Education and Universities - which were given

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<sup>16</sup> Interview C44.

<sup>17</sup> "La reducción de las competencias de Justicia y Educación preocupa a los democristianos de UCD", El País, 7 April 1979, p.11.

to a Tácito and a Social Democrat. This was an attempt to avert conflict over two pending pieces of legislation - the laws governing secondary and higher education - in which these two sectors had radically different projects. Certainly this suggested that for all Suárez's dominance, the coalitional logic of policy and office pay-offs to different groups had not been eliminated. But the coalitional logic was not followed systematically, and instead it co-existed with a further concentration of governmental power around the President and his closest advisors, reflecting the developments taking place within the party organisation.

The decision to exclude key barons, and the bitterness it created amongst them, have often been cited as an important cause of the conflict which ultimately led to the party's disintegration<sup>18</sup>. The risk was that by excluding the barons from the Cabinet, the leaders of the factions present in the UCD parliamentary elite were no longer integrated into the governmental decision-making process. This left the entire responsibility for Government policy, and by extension for the success or failure of the UCD Government, on the shoulders of the President. Moreover, the absence of the factional leaders from the Cabinet meant that ministers lacked authority over the factions present in the parliamentary group. This arrangement ran into serious difficulties almost immediately, as a result of the manifest failure of the UCD Government to resolve the pressing problems facing Spain after the passing of the Constitution. The President was held responsible for the resulting crisis, and the erosion of his leadership brought into the open all the tensions which had been brewing in UCD since its foundation.

The failure of Suárez's 3rd UCD Government was not simply a reflection of his or his ministers' political shortcomings. The period of transition in Spain and the paralysis of the last years of the Franco regime had left a series of accumulated problems which had been tolerated during the regime change, but which had to be resolved once the new democratic institutions began to function. This placed the UCD Governments after 1979 under immense stress, as various aggrieved sectors began to push their demands<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, unlike in the constituent period, UCD could no longer count on a restrained and cooperative attitude from the PSOE, and given its lack of a majority, was left with a highly unstable parliamentary

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<sup>18</sup> For example Caciagli, "La parábola de la Unión de Centro Democrático", Op.cit., p.413; Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.459.

<sup>19</sup> See for example Joaquín Prieto and José Luis Barbería, El enigma del elefante: La conspiración del 23-F, Madrid, Ediciones El País, 1991, pp.63-64.

situation which narrowed its legislative room for manoeuvre.

The PSOE's change of direction left the President politically exposed, and revealed the basic fragility of his previously dominant leadership position<sup>20</sup>. In the context of the internal UCD debate, Suárez's position had been to support consensus (the "política de Estado") against the defence of the interests of the largely middle-class UCD electorate (a "política de partido"), advocated by the conservative factions. The end of consensus required Suárez to adopt a political line, consisting of a coherent set of real policies, capable of resolving political problems, and which could be defended as consistent with the interests of the UCD social base. Suárez proved unable to do this, with disastrous consequences for the consolidation of the organisation. In the words of one UCD "critic",

Durante la etapa constituyente, la labor del Gobierno es la labor constituyente. Sobre esto se estaba de acuerdo, y eso era una meta muy importante y que llenaba todo. Pero al día siguiente de las elecciones el gran problema es que Adolfo Suárez no sabe qué hacer con el Gobierno. El hecho es que él no tenía programa, y el Gobierno pasa a ser un Gobierno sin capitán, sin rumbo, sin metas. El Gobierno quedaba a la deriva. Y esto inmediatamente se transmite a UCD, porque todos los ministros lo comentan, y el desprestigio de Adolfo es muy rápido dentro del partido como hombre que no tiene dirección porque no tiene objetivos hacia los cuales dirigir el partido. No hay dirección, y aquello provoca una crisis enorme<sup>21</sup>.

Suárez's failure to provide effective leadership in the post-constituent phase can be explained in terms of both objective and subjective factors. First, the problems facing Spain in 1979 were formidable, as Arias Salgado recalls:

No hay Gobierno, ni con mayoría ni sin mayoría que haga frente a 4 años de crisis económica embalsada mientras se discute la Constitución, se montan las instituciones democráticas, se organizan los partidos políticos (...). Eso es imposible<sup>22</sup>.

The gravity of the Spanish economic situation did not permit solutions free of political cost. A policy favouring the upper-middle classes would have provoked the reaction of the left,

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<sup>20</sup> This fragility is perhaps unsurprising in view of the nature of Suárez's political background; see Chapter 2.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Arias Salgado, June 1992.

putting political stability at risk; at the same time powerful economic interest groups - influential in conservative sectors of UCD - pressed for such a policy<sup>23</sup>. Similarly, the reorganisation of the territorial structure of the State was dominated by the self-sustaining dialectic of threats of military intervention and the pressures of radical regionalist groups, and in particular the terrorist activities of ETA<sup>24</sup>. These daunting problems had to be addressed by an unconsolidated and in part inexperienced political elite, operating within an archaic and inefficient State administration.

But the ineffectiveness of Suárez's 3rd UCD Government cannot be explained only in terms of the severity of environmental constraints and unavailability of benefits. It was also the result of Suárez's own weaknesses as a political leader, which came into evidence with the new requirements of constitutional democracy. Suárez appeared to be overwhelmed by the emerging difficulties, and offered no coherent programme of action to resolve them: the flow of collective incentives to the party elite dried up. According to one senior party official, "Suárez tenía sólo un proyecto que era el tránsito. En el momento en que se aprueba la Constitución Suárez se queda sin proyecto, ya no sabe qué hacer"<sup>25</sup>. This impression is confirmed by abundant interview data. One ex-minister argues that this was the result of Suárez's instinctive approach to politics:

Suárez es una persona con gran instinto político, y que le falta quizás una idea de medio o largo plazo de cómo hay que organizar las cosas. (...) Llega un momento después de las elecciones de 1979, (...) en que literalmente se queda sin diseño de futuro. No se sabe si hay que hacer una política más a la derecha, más a la izquierda o más al centro. Se crea una situación de perplejidad (...) pues se ve que es una situación en la que él no sabe efectivamente por dónde tirar<sup>26</sup>.

Suárez's lack of ideological and intellectual weight, and his inability to deal with complex technical problems of policy-making, have often been cited as explanations for his inability

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<sup>23</sup> In the words of a party leader interviewed by Richard Gunther, "la gran patronal nos pedía que hiciéramos una política conservadora, y nos acusaban de hacer una política de demasiada contemporización con la izquierda, sin darse cuenta de que uno de los problemas que nosotros tratábamos de evitar es que hubiera confrontaciones en la calle" (Interview C34).

<sup>24</sup> For a thorough analysis of the terrorism-golpismo dynamic in this period see Preston, The triumph of democracy in Spain, Op.cit., pp.160-173.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>26</sup> Interview C36.

to govern effectively in this period. For Martín Villa,

Suárez es un hombre excepcional para una situación excepcional, y sin embargo no tan apto para situaciones más ordinarias. Según pasan los días y los años, hay que atender a la economía, a la seguridad social, a la educación, a la sanidad, y entonces ya el entusiasmo de Suárez sobre estos temas no es tan importante<sup>27</sup>.

One of Suárez's closest allies in that period confirms this view:

Adolfo Suárez es una persona que no sirve para la vida cotidiana, para el Gobierno cotidiano. Vive más bien de las grandes cuestiones, de las grandes decisiones, lo que es presidir un Consejo de ministros más bien le aburre. Y al final cuando un jefe del Gobierno no trabaja las 24 horas del día en la dirección política, todo se afloja, se coordina mal, y se empiezan a producir fallos funcionales que al final se traducen en fallos políticos. A Suárez no le gusta dirigir un partido político y una acción de Gobierno cotidiano. Y eso implica un vaciamiento de liderazgo directivo y práctico<sup>28</sup>.

Suárez's leadership crisis affected Cabinet unity, in that the divergences between ministers from opposing factions began to emerge, reducing the effectiveness and coherence of Government activity. For instance, the Catholic newspaper Ya complained that a measure prepared by the Christian Democrat Cavero as Minister of Education had been blocked by the new Minister of Universities, a Social Democrat:

Este tipo de contradicciones suscitan muchas dudas en el ciudadano. ¿Qué sucede? ¿Que cada ministro hace y deshace según sus preferencias personales? En tal caso, ¿qué papel desempeña el silencioso presidente del Gabinete?<sup>29</sup>.

Within UCD too, Suárez's style of leadership was criticised as lacking authority to resolve inter-ministerial conflicts. His lack of interest in detailed policy discussions with his ministers meant he was often unaware of ministerial activity, and in no position to take authoritative decisions on policy and ensure a degree of collective Cabinet responsibility. According to Oscar Alzaga, the emergence of policy divergence within the Government was largely the consequence of the President's failure to intervene by coordinating Government activity:

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Martín Villa, September 1993.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>29</sup> "¿Quién coordina a los ministros?", Ya, 11 May 1979.

El Gobierno de UCD tuvo unos problemas a partir del 79 crónicos, prácticamente perennes, que eran a su vez el reflejo de la falta de liderazgo de Adolfo, pero si hubiera sido un presidente del Gobierno que hubiera despachado con los ministros, hubiera preparado las reuniones de los Consejos de Ministros, hubiera definido una línea política o económica del Gobierno que hubiera respaldado, probablemente los tiras y afloja entre los ministros hubieran tenido un límite, que era la capacidad de arbitraje de un presidente del Gobierno dispuesto a ejercer como tal<sup>30</sup>.

At the same time, Suárez was accused of combining lack of visible leadership with an autocratic style: for example in important questions of State he often marginalised the ministers formally responsible, taking responsibility himself or, increasingly often in 1979-80, delegating in Fernando Abril. This was particularly evident in the autonomy question, where the Ministers for the Regions Clavero<sup>31</sup> and then Fontán<sup>32</sup> were both kept out of the real decision-making. This was naturally resented by the ministers in question, undermining the cohesion of the Cabinet.

The result was that the Government was no longer acting as a cohesive unit in pursuit of a common goal (as it had in the constituent period 1977-79). Instead, ministers were also using their powers against rival factions, and the President was not exercising the authoritative leadership necessary to maintain cooperative effort between factions pursuing divergent political objectives. Parliamentary and Government cohesion in the constituent period had not required such a visible leadership role, given that there was a solid consensus on the basic objectives to be achieved. As Cavero states,

En los aspectos como son el modelo de régimen político, la forma del Estado, no era difícil que hubiera un acuerdo. Estábamos de acuerdo en la separación Iglesia-Estado, en la economía social de mercado, en materia de libertades. Pero en el momento en que termina esa etapa, en 1979, y que hay que gobernar, ahí ya empiezan a surgir las tensiones, porque en las medidas concretas de Gobierno, ya se empiezan a notar un poco ciertas diferencias<sup>33</sup>.

No debate had been encouraged on party policy after the passing of the Constitution, and the

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>31</sup> Clavero complains in his memoirs that "Mi marginación llegó a tal extremo que cuando retornó Tarradellas... en acto de gran trascendencia política presidido por el propio Suárez, se me indicó que ese día fuera yo a otra región para justificar mi ausencia": España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., p.42.

<sup>32</sup> According to Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.193.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.



1979 electoral programme was drawn up on the basis of vague statements of intention by UCD ministers<sup>34</sup>. The legitimacy of this document as a useful tool for policy-making was limited by the departure of many of these ministers from the Cabinet in March 1979. In the absence of a programme legitimated by party support, the responsibility for elaborating a clear and coherent government project fell to the all-powerful party leader. Suárez's inability to perform this role was particularly damaging in view of his refusal to engage in coalitional-style bargaining:

Cuando llegó el momento de gobernar, en vez de intentar buscar una línea de compromiso, en vez de pactar y decir, bueno, vamos a ceder nosotros en esto, que es lo que se hace en las coaliciones cuando gobiernan en Europa, lo que se hace es una ficción por parte de Suárez, de que si esto es un partido unitario, todos somos los mismos, todos somos de UCD. Y detrás de esa ficción sin embargo hay un reparto de carteras<sup>35</sup>.

In effect, after March 1979, Suárez assumed full responsibility for the political direction of an ideologically divided Cabinet, without formally recognising these divisions, nor playing a decisive role in policy-making himself. In the words of one UCD leader, "el Gobierno no se ha comportado como un Gabinete que toma las decisiones mayoritariamente, tiene una línea a la que se someten todos sus integrantes (...) Suárez dimitió en la práctica de su función de cabeza del ejecutivo"<sup>36</sup>.

The inability of the President to unite his Cabinet around a set of political objectives made effective government action impossible. This had a destabilising effect on the party's internal affairs. Suárez's key role in achieving the common objective of a democratic Constitution gave him control over the flow of collective incentives to the party elite, justifying his powerful leadership position and promoting internal coherence. In 1979-80 however, there was no common objective on which to base cooperative behaviour, which made it difficult for the leadership to distribute appropriate collective incentives to the party sub-groups. Suárez's failure to effectively coordinate his Cabinet, resulting in conflicting policy decisions and government paralysis, had the opposite effect. The flow of collective benefits ceased, and the discontented party elite held Suárez responsible for this failure.

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<sup>34</sup> See Joaquín Prieto and José Luis Barbería, El enigma del elefante: La conspiración del 23-F, Op.cit., p.63.

<sup>35</sup> Interview C65.

<sup>36</sup> Interview B2.

The UCD and its leader also faced increasing criticism and public disapproval, expressed in the opinion polls carried out in that period, which show a constant decline in the President's approval rating in the period 1979-80: from 43% (more than the 35% of the vote polled by the party in general elections) in March 1979, to 35% in March 1980, and 26% in July 1980<sup>37</sup>. This tendency was matched by the decline in UCD's poll rating, from 27% in December 1979, to 16% in April 1980, and 13% in December 1980<sup>38</sup>. This decline revealed the fragility of UCD's electoral base, and the loss of the support of the non-identifying centre voters whose votes Suárez had obtained in the 1977-79 period. This dearth of electoral resources also had grave implications for the presidential model of party organisation, which rested on the centralisation of resources for electoral mobilisation around the party leadership.

### 2.3. Government failure and the narrowing of the social base: Economic crisis and terrorism

This decline in popular backing was the result of the UCD Government's failure to offer tangible benefits, or at least some prospect of them, to the sectors of Spanish society which had supported it. UCD's electoral successes in 1977 and 1979 were achieved on the basis of its pivotal role in the process of democratisation, an objective supported by the vast majority of Spaniards. In this sense, the policy output of the UCD Governments in this period satisfied national rather than sectoral or class interests. The resolution of the political crisis of the transition and the aversion of a new civil war was a collective benefit perceived by most of the Spanish electorate, and this was reflected in the fact that Suárez's popularity rating in March 1979 was higher than the percentage of votes won by UCD (see above).

After March 1979, the flow of collective benefits dried up, as the problem of the change of regime gave way to other more complex problems which the new regime was expected to resolve. In particular, the 3rd UCD Government was perceived as failing to adequately address the two problems which gave most cause for concern amongst the Spanish

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<sup>37</sup> See Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.312.

<sup>38</sup> Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, "La evolución del voto", Op.cit., p.309. Other polls show a similar decline, although maintaining a more acceptable level of support (from 32% in December 1979, to 30.2.% in April 1980, to 27.4% in December 1980); see Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.296.

electorate<sup>39</sup>: the economic crisis and its social consequences, and the territorial organisation of the State, with its related problem of terrorism. The aggravation of these two problems in 1979-80, combined with what one ex-minister has described as "la resaca de la transición"<sup>40</sup>, created a climate which became known as "desencanto" - disenchantment<sup>41</sup>. The Spanish economy, after a slight recovery in the period 1976-79, fell into a deep recession in 1979-80, marked by the stagnation of production and a rapid increase in unemployment, and aggravated by the second world oil crisis in December 1979. The general indicators of the economy for 1979-80 - growth, unemployment and inflation - made depressing reading, and naturally popular discontent was directed at the Government and its President. Given the practical impossibility of Government policy quickly resolving this situation, Suárez and his Cabinet suffered the consequences of the scarcity of benefits to distribute both to UCD members and to the party's social base.

But beyond the inevitable political cost of governing an economic crisis, the UCD Government, and particularly Suárez himself, were further criticised for the way in which economic policy was handled. The fundamental divisions within UCD on economic policy - in particular the conflict between Liberals and Social Democrats - had already emerged in 1978. As in the constituent negotiations, the need to maintain consensus (in the case of economic policy, represented by the Moncloa Pacts) had allowed Suárez to overcome internal differences by making UCD the arbiter of the conflicting demands of the other political forces. After the 1979 elections, the divisions between the Social Democrats (García Díez, Bustelo) and more conservative ministers in the economic area (Leal, Lamo de Espinosa) re-emerged. Suárez had little interest in economic policy, and left the coordination of the economic ministries initially to Fernando Abril. As one UCD leader explains, this system failed to resolve conflict over policy:

Suárez no estuvo dispuesto a definirse por una política económica, como era notorio que no tenía ninguna preparación económica, y delegaba en Fernando Abril, pero esa delegación era en principio total, y después en la medida en la que Adolfo se fue dando cuenta que ahí había una línea en conflicto, la delegación en Abril suponía que él tenía el

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<sup>39</sup> See Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, "Barómetro de opinión pública, junio-julio 1979", in Revista de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 6, April-June 1979, pp.235-307 (especially pp.258-276; pp.295-307).

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Alberto Oliart, September 1993.

<sup>41</sup> See de la Cuadra and Gallego-Díaz, Del consenso al desencanto, Op.cit., pp.201-.

poder de solventar esos conflictos, y llega el momento que decide limitar el poder de Abril, y lo cesa. Durante todo el período desde que empieza a limitar el poder de Abril hasta que lo cesa, hay una situación de falta de arbitraje en política económica, y la confrontación en el Gobierno se debe a que se están practicando políticas económicas contradictorias<sup>42</sup>.

As a result, not only did the Government suffer the backlash of an economic crisis of almost unprecedented severity, but it was also discredited for its failure to provide any coherent response to it. Moreover, there was no real attempt on the part of Suárez to explain the difficulties to the electorate and justify the sacrifices being asked. A corollary of this was a major increase in strike activity, for which by most indicators 1979 was by far the worst year of the Spanish transition: 1,789 strikes involving 5,752,300 workers, resulting in 21,383,300 working days lost (compared to 1,356 strikes, involving 3,633,000 workers and 16,092,300 days lost in 1978)<sup>43</sup>. The evident disorientation of the Cabinet on economic policy in the face of such grave problems seriously undermined Suárez's authority as President.

On top of economic problems, the terrorist threat also grew, with 118 deaths in 1979, 33 more than the previous year<sup>44</sup>. Along with unemployment, terrorism was the major problem facing Spain in this period. However, the passing of the Basque and Catalan Statutes in May 1979 did nothing to ease the problem. This isolation probably explains the increase of terrorist violence in this period, which encouraged the creation of subversive movements within the Army<sup>45</sup>. In this question as in others, the failure of Suárez to respond to popular unease, even by superficial gestures such as attending the funerals of victims of terrorism, undermined his authority<sup>46</sup>. The Government found it difficult to please anyone: the concession of Basque autonomy won only the grudging support of most regionalists, and the contemptuous rejection of ETA, whilst conservatives regarded Suárez as having given in to the pressure of terrorists. The problem was aggravated by the Government's failure to act

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>43</sup> José Babiano and Leopoldo Moscoso, "Los conflictos sociales en fase depresiva ante la adopción de políticas de ajuste: El caso español", *Zona Abierta*, 56, 1991, pp.121-173 (p.149).

<sup>44</sup> Tusell, *La transición española a la democracia*, Op.cit., p.66.

<sup>45</sup> See Preston, *The triumph of democracy in Spain*, Op.cit., pp.164-5.

<sup>46</sup> For instance, after the deaths at the hands of ETA of three senior military officers in May 1979 the Government's lack of initiative was widely criticised, even from within the party: see "El Gobierno calla", *El País*, 29 May 1979, p.10.

authoritatively to stop illegal repressive actions by the security forces<sup>47</sup>, although as in the case of the economy, there was no easy solution.

Suárez had built up his electoral popularity as a political leader (his situational charisma), and in consequence his authority as President of the Government and of UCD, on the basis of his success in overcoming a situation of national emergency from 1976-78. His failure to overcome the post-constituent crisis, or even to offer some idea of how to address this crisis, quickly undermined both his electoral popularity and his presidential authority. Particularly damaging to Suárez's popularity was the impression of powerlessness he gave in the face of difficulty. He was much criticised for remaining isolated in the Moncloa Palace, out of the reach of the Press, the opposition, and even his own party membership. His failure to offer a visible, public leadership role gave rise to a generalised atmosphere of desgobierno: that rather than governing badly, Suárez was not governing at all<sup>48</sup>. In fact, this was to some extent true, as much of the responsibility for Cabinet coordination fell on Vice-President Fernando Abril<sup>49</sup>, who, as a mere delegate, lacked the authority of the President. The decline of Suárez's popularity was certainly a result of the interruption of the "flow of political benefits" which he had been able to maintain until the end of 1978. But just as damaging was his inability to distribute collective incentives in the form of promised benefits - a coherent political project containing proposed solutions to the country's problems - with which to justify his leadership position. This lack of leadership created important contradictions in policy, and conflicts within the Government and the parliamentary group, leading to political failures which gravely undermined the credibility of UCD as a political force.

The Government's poor performance in 1979-80, as well as discrediting Adolfo Suárez as a political leader, called into question the organisational structure and functioning of UCD. The failure of the leader implied the failure of the organisational model which concentrated party authority around him, as Arias Salgado explains:

De cara al Gobierno el aparato no tenía ningún peso como organización. El Gobierno tenía el predominio claro, y eso es una de las características de la vida política española - el peso extraordinario y decisivo del liderazgo. El

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<sup>47</sup> Fernando Reinales, "Democratización y terrorismo en el caso español", in de Blas et al, La transición democrática española, Op.cit., pp.611-644 (p.631).

<sup>48</sup> For an analysis of Suárez's decline, see Preston, The triumph of democracy in Spain, Op.cit., pp.172-188.

<sup>49</sup> Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.87.

liderazgo carismático es la percha de la que está colgado todo. Los resultados electorales, el nombramiento del Gobierno, buena parte de la Administración Pública, está colgado de esa percha. Pero Suárez no ejerce cotidianamente el poder que corresponde a esa percha. Y eso lleva a un creciente ejercicio del poder político por parte de Fernando Abril. Y no podía suplir, ni yo ni Abril, no teníamos la legitimidad para suplir el carisma de Adolfo Suárez. Esa disminución de la fortaleza del poder central es lo que determina que empiezan a surgir poderes periféricos<sup>50</sup>.

Suárez's role may have been over after the passing of the Constitution, since a different kind of leadership was required. What requires explanation is why the decline of Suárez's leadership caused such a grave crisis in UCD. In the absence of a clear party programme, the decline of leadership authority allowed the latent divergences in factional objectives within UCD to flourish, provoking a bitter internal conflict between the party leadership and the minority party elites - the "poderes periféricos". This was particularly grave for a party such as UCD, whose origins were conditioned by the existence of an exceptional centralisation of political authority around President Suárez - a kind of situational charisma which overcame the organisation's original ideological incoherence. In the rest of this Chapter I examine the consequences of leadership crisis on two dimensions: the territorial or vertical dimension, relating to the relationship between the leadership and the provincial and regional structures of the party; and the factional or horizontal dimension, relating to the conflicts between barons and factions in the UCD parliamentary elite.

### **3. Party organisation in a changing State: The territorial dimension of leadership crisis**

#### **3.1. Regional autonomy and the UCD provincial elite**

Leadership failure had disastrous effects on UCD's internal stability because of the organisational shortcomings of the party. The party structures established at the 1st Congress were not set in motion in the period after the elections. Most remarkably, the Political Council, the most authoritative representative body of the party established by the statutes, due to meet every four months and charged with laying down the general lines of policy to be applied by the Executive Committee, was not constituted until more than a year after the Congress. This meant that the Executive lacked the direction of the standing organ of the party Congress, which according to the statutes would condition its decisions. Martín Villa,

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<sup>50</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

in his memoirs, has condemned "la potenciación del consejo político, que determinaría el marco de actuación del comité ejecutivo. El comité ejecutivo se convirtió así en un órgano inoperante, y el consejo político apenas fue convocado"<sup>51</sup>. Whether or not for this reason, the Executive Committee, to meet every two weeks according to the party statutes, in fact met more or less monthly (28 times in the two and a quarter years between the I and II Congresses<sup>52</sup>), and periods of two or three months without meetings were not uncommon. This created a situation that Huneus has described as follows: "lo único decisivo era la posición dominante de Suárez y el Consejo de Ministros como instancia colegiada deliberativa y decisoria"<sup>53</sup>. In this context, the failure of the Government to establish a clear political line left the whole party structure disorientated.

The analysis of the regional autonomy question provides interesting examples of the successes and failures of the presidentialist model of party management. The UCD Government faced the difficult task after 1979 of reforming the territorial structure of the State whilst the territorial structure of the party itself was only just emerging. Huneus has argued that the failure to equip UCD with a strong regional party structure was a source of conflict:

UCD (...) tenía una organización territorial disfuncional al sistema político de España: mientras los estatutos de UCD hacían radicar la autoridad y el poder del partido en la provincia, la Constitución establecía a las regiones como el eje de la organización territorial del Estado. De esta manera, UCD careció de un nivel institucional adecuado para fijar directivas legítimas para actuar en el proceso autonómico en la respectiva comunidad, provocándose una dispersión y conflicto insoluble por la existencia de diferentes grupos directivos en las correspondientes provincias de cada comunidad<sup>54</sup>.

The autonomy process was certainly a destabilising factor in the territorial development of the party, but this was not easily avoidable by making the region the main organisational unit; after all, despite the increasing importance of the regional level, the province remained

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<sup>51</sup> Martín Villa, Al servicio del Estado, Op.cit., p.86.

<sup>52</sup> Rafael Calvo Ortega, "Informe sobre la actuación de Unión de Centro Democrático entre el I y el II Congreso Nacional", Op.cit., p.283.

<sup>53</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático..., Op.cit., p.242.

<sup>54</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.263.

fundamental as the basic electoral constituency. The UCD did establish a regional level of organisation in the party statutes, consisting of a Regional Assembly, Executive Committee, President and Secretary<sup>55</sup>, elected by the provincial structures of each region. In practice this regional level had little real presence in the organisation, and took few decisions. But a more serious problem was that UCD's internal divisions in some areas were a constant source of conflict, for which the creation of a more powerful regional apparatus was no solution; indeed it ran the risk of magnifying the conflicts. For example, the uniprovincial regions of Navarra and Madrid suffered prolonged crises in spite of the lack of interprovincial rivalry. In the end, the strategy chosen was fundamentally to keep the peripheral organisation out of the decision-making process on autonomy questions: the UCD National Council for the Autonomous Communities, a party body which would have brought together party representatives from each region to define UCD's autonomy policy, was never constituted<sup>56</sup>.

The neglect of the party's regional structures was a deliberate decision, aimed at facilitating central government control over the process of devolution to the regions. The UCD Government faced strong enough pressures from opposition regionalist parties, without having to contend with troublesome centrifugal demands from within the party. Therefore the party apparatus preferred the province as an organisational unit because "así es más fácil controlar el partido porque las bases y núcleos de poder se fragmentan, y tienen poco poder de decisión. La provincia no tenía capacidad para desafiar el poder central del partido"<sup>57</sup>. As mentioned in the previous Chapter, a strategy of subordinating the periphery to the control of the centre was followed in conflictual provinces, with some degree of success.

In some areas problems arose between local personalities manoeuvring for position in the new structures of the Autonomous Communities. Throughout 1979 this kind of conflict became more and more frequent, with the constitution of pre-autonomies, and the opening of negotiations for the Statutes of Autonomy. In Segovia, the Independents representing the UCD in Parliament abandoned the General Council of Castilla-León, as part of their battle to establish Segovia as a uniprovincial Autonomous Community. The President of the Diputación

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<sup>55</sup> Article 32, UCD statutes (in Solución a un reto, Op.cit.).

<sup>56</sup> This body was included in the statutes as a result of pressures from Andalusian delegates at the first Congress (Clavero, España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., p.118).

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.



General de Aragón, the Independent Bolea Foradada, gave a conference in the Club Siglo XXI to argue the case for special treatment and full autonomy for Aragon, which he regarded as a "nationality" to the same extent as Catalonia and the Basque Country<sup>58</sup>. These cases saw local elites in areas of limited or non-existent national-regional identity pushing for the fullest possible devolution of administrative powers, in the light of the examples of Basques and Catalans.

This represented a difficult test for the strategy of the party apparatus: as well as the horizontal tensions between ideological factions in the parliamentary group, vertical tensions were emerging between the party leadership and the UCD provincial organisation. Some provincial and regional elites had autonomous political resources in their areas and were consequently difficult to coerce (the costs to them of exit being relatively low). The support that some of these elites expressed for regional devolution narrowed the UCD Government's room for manoeuvre in the autonomy process. The UCD elite in Galicia posed particular problems. Galicia was widely perceived as having as much right to autonomy as the more vocal nationalities of the Basque Country and Catalonia. However, unlike these latter cases, Galicia was an UCD stronghold, and a stronghold built largely on close cooperation and integration of caciques controlling patron-client structures. For UCD caciques the autonomy process constituted an unprecedented opportunity for assuming control of increasing administrative powers, and, by extension, increasingly large budgets. For the UCD Government, however, Galicia was seen as an opportunity to mark the difference in status between the Basques and Catalans and the rest of the Autonomous Communities, in order to keep the devolution process under control. As a result of this a division appeared in UCD-Galicia between centralistas and galleguistas, which led to a series of confrontations.

In the Galician province of Lugo, a power struggle emerged between Antonio Rosón, who had led the candidature to the Congress in 1977, and Otero Novas, ex-Minister of the Presidency, who had displaced Rosón in 1979. In this conflict, Otero, a Tácito close to Suárez, pushed the Government line that Galicia's autonomy should be limited, whilst Rosón, President of the pre-autonomy (the Xunta) and a part of Galicia's traditional clientelar power network<sup>59</sup>, opposed the proposed Statute of Autonomy<sup>60</sup>. In April 1979, a crisis was

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<sup>58</sup> "El presidente de la Diputación General pide tratamiento de nacionalidad", El País, 23 October 1979, p.21.

<sup>59</sup> See José Manuel Otero Novas, Nuestra democracia puede morir, Barcelona, Plaza y Janés, 1990, p.29.

provoked when Rosón imposed his candidate for the Presidency of the provincial Diputación, against the decision of the provincial Executive Committee, whose centralista majority resigned en bloc<sup>61</sup>. As in other similar cases, the apparatus appointed a comisión gestora, under the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Labour Harguindey. However this failed to impose central control: the Provincial Assembly held in October 1979 gave total victory to Rosón, whose power in the local party was such that he managed to elect two lists of his men, thus leaving the entire Executive Committee under his control<sup>62</sup>.

Other similar cases revealed the difficulty of controlling the peripheral organisation in areas where nationalism-regionalism was a major political issue. In Navarra, a division arose over the status of Navarra with regard to Basque autonomy. A conservative faction hostile to Basque nationalism took the UCD provincial Presidency, and conducted a very vocal opposition to the "concessions" made by the Government to the Basque nationalists. In December 1979 the tension rose when the deputy Pegenaute and the senator Monge left UCD over the autonomy question<sup>63</sup>, arguing that the national UCD had not supported them in the struggle to maintain Navarra's independence from the Basque Country. The situation worsened in April 1980 when the UCD conservative Del Burgo, President of the Navarra regional government, was forced out of the post as a result of a financial scandal. In this crisis, Del Burgo defied the national leadership by calling a meeting of the regional party, against the Secretary General's instructions<sup>64</sup>. As in the case of Lugo, the arrival of Moscoso, a presidential advisor, as head of the UCD candidature for the Congress in the 1979 elections failed to impose central authority on the provincial organisation. Similar problems were posed in Catalonia, where the apparatus's attempts to encourage a coalition with minor nationalist parties were hindered by divisions in the regional UCD between catalanistas and

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<sup>60</sup> A similar situation in Pontevedra set the martin villista Sancho Rof against the galleguista Víctor Moro.

<sup>61</sup> "Dimiten 16 miembros de la ejecutiva de UCD en Lugo", El País, 28 April 1979, p.11.

<sup>62</sup> "El ministro Otero, derrotado en Lugo por Antonio Rosón", El País, 30 October 1979, p.18.

<sup>63</sup> "El diputado navarro Pedro Pegenaute abandona su escaño en el Congreso", El País, 11 December 1979, p.11.

<sup>64</sup> "Del Burgo convoca a la UCD regional en contra de lo acordado en Madrid", El País, 25 April 1980, p.17. Del Burgo continued to defy orders from the apparatus until he was finally expelled from the party.

españolistas<sup>65</sup>.

These were eloquent examples of the difficulties of imposing central discipline on local elites with independent power bases. However in most of these cases the strategy was basically successful, as the highly centralised structure of UCD allowed the Government, through the party apparatus, to keep the peripheral organisation under some degree of control and avoid open rebellion against central government policy. This type of organisation was highly functional for the transition process, but not so appropriate for the post-constituent period. The weakness of this approach was that the centralised party bureaucracy, as a result of its emphasis on controlling provincial structures and limiting them to electoral activities, did not act as a representative channel. In other words, it failed to communicate the vicissitudes of public opinion and the atmosphere within UCD's electoral base to the national leadership. Not only was the apparatus unaware of the demands of its membership: its members, and local officials, lacked information on the Government's aims and intentions, hindering coordination of party activity at national, regional and provincial levels. This approach was successful in maintaining party discipline in some key regions, but it provoked a serious organisational failure in Andalusia.

### 3.2. An organisational failure: The "rationalisation" of the autonomy question

In spite of the evident importance of clientelism and access to State resources in some of these cases, the tensions provoked by the autonomy process were often the result of genuine aspirations to self-government by regions with strong cultural or linguistic identities. These aspirations in some cases had strong popular backing, which allowed some regional political elites to mobilise strong support for decentralisation. The UCD Government faced abundant difficulties in directing the process. As Gunther explains,

la concesión de la autonomía al País Vasco y a Cataluña creó un modelo a imitar en otras regiones de España. Dado este modelo, la élite política de esas regiones sintió que debía pedir lo mismo para sus electores, a menos que quedaran relegados al *status* de ciudadanos de segunda clase<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> See "Folchi, presidente de UCD-Barcelona", Diario 16, 12 November 1979, p.7; "Antón Cañellas, elegido presidente de los centristas catalanes en el congreso de Gerona", El País, 23 December 1979, p.14.

<sup>66</sup> Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.454.

In contrast, the constant threat of military intervention to defend the "unity" of Spain in the face of Basque terrorism, and the need to avoid administrative chaos, advised caution and a gradualist approach to regional devolution. The UCD Government could not latch on to the political opportunities offered by popular demand for devolution, and instead took the full force of the frustrations created by its inability to quickly satisfy this demand.

The Basque and Catalan cases were resolved relatively quickly, with their Statutes of Autonomy being approved in the summer of 1979, through the "fast lane" procedure specified in article 151 of the Constitution. In the case of the Statute for Galicia, an attempt was made to establish a more limited autonomy than for the first two cases, by adding a restrictive clause subordinating the legislation of the Autonomous Parliament to the Law of the State. This was opposed by significant UCD leaders in Galicia such as Meilán Gil, Rosón and Pío Cabanillas, who argued that the Statute should not be supported by UCD parliamentarians<sup>67</sup>. Discipline eventually prevailed within UCD, but not within the PSOE, which voted against the Statute, breaking the pattern of consensus over constitutional issues: the Socialists had voted for the Basque and Catalan Statutes, and the Minister of the Presidency Pérez Llorca had argued that consensus was essential for such laws<sup>68</sup>. After a few days, the Government had to back down, and acceded to pressures from the PSOE and its own parliamentarians for the Constitutional Commission to reconsider the Statute, revealing UCD's vulnerability and inability to govern alone on constitutional questions<sup>69</sup>.

According to interview data, this situation resulted from the PSOE leadership's inability to force its regional elite to adhere to a national level agreement with the UCD<sup>70</sup>. This suggests that had the UCD, like the PSOE, had an effective regional tier of party organisation, the UCD Government would have found itself with little room for manoeuvre over the autonomy question. The PSOE's unreliability on regional issues led the UCD leadership to act alone to halt the "stampede for autonomy", by recommending that its voters

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<sup>67</sup> "El Estatuto enfrenta a la UCD de Galicia", Diario 16, 5 October 1979, p.8. "Discrepancias entre los miembros de UCD por el Estatuto de Galicia", El País, 26 October 1979, p.20.

<sup>68</sup> "Cuando una de esas leyes no obtiene el acuerdo UCD-PSOE, la opinión se alarma" ("El entendimiento UCD-PSOE, necesario para el desarrollo de la Constitución", El País, 4 November 1979, p.17).

<sup>69</sup> See Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.99.

<sup>70</sup> Interviews C46, D1.

should abstain in the referendum for Andalusian autonomy<sup>71</sup>. This decision was the result of pressures from centralist sectors of UCD, notably Martín Villa<sup>72</sup>, to "rationalise" the autonomy process, by making it clear that the Basque, Catalan and Galician Statutes were special cases, and that other regions could expect a slower and more restrictive process of devolution<sup>73</sup>. The decision was taken in spite of the PSOE's refusal to sponsor a campaign against the Andalusian referendum.

The referendum was a political disaster for UCD, as the PSOE - whose electoral heartland was Andalusia - launched an aggressive campaign against the UCD's decision. The result of the vote was that in all but one of the Andalusian provinces, a quorum in favour of autonomy by the "fast lane" was reached, whilst in the other, Almería, the quorum was only a handful of votes short. This was a formal victory, but a resounding moral defeat for the Government: the impression given was that Andalusia had been cheated out of autonomy on spurious procedural grounds, despite massive popular demand. Particularly damaging to the Government was the reaction of Minister of Culture Clavero (founder of the regionalist PSLA and ex-Minister of the Regions), who resigned from the Government and the UCD group in the Congress, and campaigned against abstention<sup>74</sup>.

The preparation of the referendum was indicative of the failings of the UCD as a highly centralised organisation. According to Clavero, the party leadership consistently refused his requests for an internal debate on autonomy strategy, at which the UCD Regional Executive Committee took its own decision in June 1979 to promote accession to autonomy by the "fast lane", and began to mobilise the party's municipal representatives in order to

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<sup>71</sup> Article 151 of the Constitution - the "fast lane" - established a referendum, on request by a majority of local councillors in a region, which required a vote in favour by the majority of the electoral census in each province.

<sup>72</sup> The Executive Committee appointed a Commission chaired by Martín Villa, to study the problem and propose a way of "rationalising" the devolution process (Clavero, España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., p.119).

<sup>73</sup> For a fuller analysis of the reason behind this decision see for example the account of Clavero in "El proceso autonómico español y Andalucía", in Club Siglo XXI, Convivencia y respeto social, Vol.3, Madrid, Unión Editorial, 1980, pp.471-482; and the keynote speech by Martín Villa, "¿Es posible la libertad?", in Club Siglo XXI, Convivencia y respeto social, Vol.2, Unión Editorial, 1980.

<sup>74</sup> 80 UCD members left the party over the referendum: "Tras el descalabro, caras nuevas", Cambio 16, N.432, 16 March 1980, p.27.

prepare the necessary petition<sup>75</sup>. The national leadership's decision to oppose the "fast lane" was a humiliation for the regional leaders of UCD, who had confirmed this position as late as November<sup>76</sup>. Moreover, the apparatus tried to suspend an emergency meeting of the Regional Executive Committee called by Clavero, and when this failed, "infiltrated" powerful figures from the Government in order to try and control the meeting<sup>77</sup>. In response, Clavero resigned, taking with him most of the UCD Executive Committee in Seville, and several local Councillors and Provincial Deputies<sup>78</sup>. Although the other provincial organisations fell into line with the national leadership, the loss of Clavero, Minister of Culture, ex-Minister for the Regions and President of UCD in Andalusia, was a blow to the credibility of UCD's stance. The lack of dialogue and unpredictability of the party leadership left Clavero with the choice of resigning, or adopting a position incoherent with his previous actions. The importance of communication failures is confirmed by the admission of Martín Villa - the inspiration behind the change of strategy - that "el fallo nuestro ha estado más en no contarle el replanteamiento a nuestra propia gente"<sup>79</sup>.

Clavero's rebellion, which was founded on his control over the Seville provincial Executive, offers little support to the argument in favour of a regional rather than a provincial party structure. It is true that the lack of regional coordination meant that within Andalusia, different provinces followed different political lines, discrediting UCD's approach to the autonomy issue. A similar situation had occurred in November 1979: when demonstrations were organised in favour of full autonomy for Andalusia, the UCD's reaction was decided separately by each provincial organisation, causing disorientation amongst the provincial

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<sup>75</sup> Clavero, España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., pp.121-122.

<sup>76</sup> "Los miembros de UCD en el Consejo Permanente, contra el frenazo autonómico", El País, 7 November 1979, p.18.

<sup>77</sup> Clavero, España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., p.128.

<sup>78</sup> Whilst the bulk of UCD's activists in Andalusia did not leave the party, their indignation made itself felt in other ways: the party apparatus had to bring interventores from outside the region in order to ensure some kind of UCD presence at the count: Clavero, España desde el centralismo a las autonomías, Op.cit., p.131.

<sup>79</sup> "Martín Villa: 'El artículo 151 de la Constitución deshace la funcionalidad del Estado'", El País, 30 January 1980, p.16.

leadership and creating an impression of political schizophrenia<sup>80</sup>. But the lack of organisational coordination over the Andalusian referendum cannot be attributed only to the provincial structure imposed by the Secretary General. In a regionally organised UCD Clavero, as President of UCD-Andalucía, would have had even more autonomy from the party apparatus in Madrid, and could have caused an open split between the central party apparatus and the UCD elite in the whole of the region, as happened in the PSOE over the Galician question.

Instead the failure to coordinate party activity at central and regional level was mainly a consequence of the UCD Government's inability to draw up a coherent policy on devolution and inform regional elites on the line to be taken. Clavero was allowed to mobilise support for the "fast lane" amongst the UCD provincial and local elite in Andalusia, and then abruptly told, little more than a month before the referendum, that the Government would oppose it. The failure of the President to lay down the general lines of policy (not only in regional policy) and coordinate the activities of different branches of the party led to confusion over the objectives and actions of the Government<sup>81</sup>. As one UCD official asserts, "si se sigue la historia de Suárez in 1979-80 se ve que ahí no hay ningún proyecto de integración regional"<sup>82</sup>; the outcome was that UCD policy-making smacked of improvisation, undermining the party's credibility, although it should be remembered that some of the uncertainty was a result of the PSOE's inability to keep to agreements.

The imposition of often unpredictable or contradictory decisions disorientated the party's provincial base, whilst conflicts emerging as a result of the confusion were addressed by the party apparatus using authoritarian methods, which in the case of Andalusia failed. Clavero was faced with the choice of publicly contradicting his political identity as an Andalusian regionalist, or resigning in protest. Although he had insufficient autonomous resources to achieve political power outside UCD and was dependent on the party leadership for electoral mobilisation in Andalusia and his ministerial portfolio, he chose to exercise the

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<sup>80</sup> Seville and Cádiz decided to participate, Jaén, Granada and Córdoba announced they would not, and the others took no decision: "Posturas divergentes en UCD sobre la participación en manifestaciones autonomistas", *El País*, 28 November 1979, p.22.

<sup>81</sup> Manuel Clavero claimed that, before the Andalusian crisis, "mi incomunicación con el presidente era total desde hacía algunos meses, y aunque varias veces pedí reuniones, se anulaban siempre al último momento", *España, desde el centralismo a las autonomías*, Op.cit., p.126.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

exit option and leave the party, failing to be re-elected in 1982. This case was the first example of the limits of organisational coherence on the basis of "coercive participation": dependent subgroups will subordinate themselves to the leadership's authority as long as the organisation does not follow objectives totally incompatible with theirs. Clavero's departure was the first sign of the party's declining internal coherence, the result of the failure of a highly centralised organisation to distribute collective benefits acceptable to key elite participants.

The failure in Andalusia fatally damaged UCD's credibility. The PSOE took advantage of the confusion to present itself as more advanced than UCD, accusing the Government of dictatorially blocking the development of the Constitution<sup>83</sup>. The opposition of the PSOE was always likely to be strong enough to force the UCD to back down on constitutional issues, demonstrating that consensus was the only effective way for UCD to approach such questions. The PSOE's abandonment of consensus on the autonomy issue left UCD badly exposed:

el eje de confrontación centro-periferia pasa a recaer exclusivamente sobre la UCD, mientras que, por el contrario, en el período de la elaboración de la Constitución todos los partidos asumían los dos extremos del problema<sup>84</sup>.

As a result, UCD was left alone in defending the interests of the State administrative apparatus, an unpopular role in this period. This case demonstrates the disadvantages, in terms of organisational development, that UCD faced as the governing party. Popular support for devolution presented parties with an opportunity for mass mobilisation which could be exploited to increase membership and consolidate electoral support. This opportunity was seized by the PSOE in Andalusia, but UCD's governmental responsibilities forced it into a defensive position. In this, as in other cases in this period, UCD's role as the pivot of a consociational transition required it to mute or even suppress the demands of its electorate. The organisational strategy of the party as "electoral machine" responded to this requirement. But this "bureaucratic authoritarian" party model served to insulate the organisation from its social base, with the risk that the relationship between party and voter became so tenuous as

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<sup>83</sup> See "Si el artículo 151 no sirve a UCD, que proponga una enmienda a la Constitución", *El País*, 22 January 1980, p.14.

<sup>84</sup> Capo Giol, "Estrategias para un sistema de partidos", *Op.cit.*, p.163.



to alienate supporters. In the Andalusian referendum, many UCD voters ignored the Government's indications, and the debacle had serious long-term electoral costs. According to a minister involved in the operation,

La pérdida de prestigio, la imagen de debilidad y de falta de credibilidad que dio UCD tras todo el proceso del referéndum andaluz fue tremenda en toda España, pero en Andalucía nos dejó heridos de muerte<sup>85</sup>.

The damage was not limited to Andalusia<sup>86</sup>, as was shown by the poor performance of the UCD's candidates in the elections for the regional assemblies of the Basque Country and Catalonia in March and April 1980. In the Basque Country, UCD polled 14.2% of the vote (as opposed to 16.9% in March 1979), and in Catalonia UCD's vote fell from 19.4% in March 1979 to only 10.6% in 1980<sup>87</sup>. UCD performed significantly worse in these regions than in the legislative elections of March 1979, losing out in particular to regionalist parties<sup>88</sup>. UCD lost 17% of its 1979 voters to regionalist parties in the Basque elections and 39% in Catalonia<sup>89</sup>, whilst the PSOE lost only 9% and 13%: this indicates that the political cost of the "rationalisation" of the autonomy process was largely assumed by UCD alone<sup>90</sup>.

The decision to campaign against the Andalusian referendum shows how the consolidation of UCD's electoral base was hindered by the predominance given to Government rather than party interests<sup>91</sup>. UCD leaders were aware that the party's popularity

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<sup>85</sup> Martín Villa, Al servicio del Estado, Op.cit., p.90.

<sup>86</sup> On top of the referendum, the by-election in Almería to replace the two UCD Senators who had been expelled there gave disastrous results for UCD.

<sup>87</sup> Goldie Shabad, "Las elecciones de 1982 y las autonomías", in Linz and Montero (eds.), Crisis y cambio, Op.cit., pp.525-585 (p.527).

<sup>88</sup> In fact, the results were perhaps less disastrous than they appeared, since survey data has shown that given the character of the election, the voters felt more inclined to vote for regional rather than national parties: Rafael López Pintor, La opinión pública española: Del franquismo a la democracia, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1982, p.140. UCD also polled disastrous results in subsequent regional elections in Galicia and Andalusia (see Chapter 7).

<sup>89</sup> These results also revealed the loss of the President's popular touch: Suárez had taken active part in the UCD campaign in Catalonia: "El presidente del Gobierno finaliza su campaña por las provincias catalanas", El País, 19 March 1980, p.13.

<sup>90</sup> López Pintor, La opinión pública española, Op.cit., p.138.

<sup>91</sup> In view of this, Richard Gunther has suggested that the collapse of UCD can be regarded as "one of the costs of the transition" (Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit.).

was being sacrificed in favour of the longer term functionality of the State administration; in Martín Villa's opinion, "la actitud del partido en relación con el referéndum andaluz fue un desacierto electoral, pero sin embargo un acierto político a largo plazo"<sup>92</sup>. UCD was hindered in governing in this delicate phase of democratic consolidation by its lack of a solid social base, which would have protected the party's electoral strength against the long term consequences of having to take unpopular decisions. The failure of the party as an institution representing stable social interests was also a function of the identification of many of its leaders with the global interests of the State, rather than those of any social group.

The Andalusian crisis underlined the extent to which the presidentialist model of party organisation depended for its effectiveness on strong leadership, capable of providing political direction, coordinating policy, and ensuring a supply of policy benefits to the most important sectors of the party. In this case, weak and vacillating leadership led to one part of the organisation contradicting the other, at which point coherence broke down, as even Suárez's control over governmental appointments and key electoral resources were insufficient to bend an important elite actor to his will. The electoral consequences of the referendum further undermined the centralisation of organisational authority around the Presidency.

#### **4. Leadership crisis and the recomposition of the dominant coalition**

##### **4.1. Government failure and the pressures of the barons**

The Andalusian referendum had grave consequences for Suárez's leadership and the presidentialist model of organisation. It was seized upon by the barons excluded from Government in 1979 to force upon Suárez the creation of the Permanent Commission, a subunit of the Executive Committee which would act as a means of conditioning presidential decision-making more effectively than the unwieldy and neglected Executive<sup>93</sup>. This development reflected the sharp decline in Suárez's authority, as it was used effectively as a forum for questioning his leadership: in a meeting of barons held to analyse the devolution problem in March 1980, the President was strongly criticised by his colleagues for his

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<sup>92</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Martín Villa, September 1993.

<sup>93</sup> The members of the Commission were Abril, Arias Salgado, Cabanillas, Garrigues, Alvarez de Miranda, Pérez Llorca, Calvo Ortega, Lavilla, Fernández Ordóñez and Martín Villa. From the very first meeting Martín Villa made strong criticisms of Suárez's leadership: Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.127.

unwillingness to intervene in the Andalusian referendum campaign<sup>94</sup>. The Commission, from March 1980, acted as a constant pressure on Suárez to negotiate decisions and share his power, and intervened closely in the ministerial reshuffle of April 1980.

The April crisis, which Suárez intended as a simple reshuffle of powers around the existing Cabinet, took 21 days and three meetings of the Permanent Commission to complete. The protracted negotiations and extensive intervention of the barons fully revealed the extent of Suárez's loss of authority within his own ministerial elite after the Andalusian crisis. The process was much criticised both inside and outside UCD for its failure to consult the statutory bodies of the party; instead it evolved more or less completely within the dominant coalition of the UCD elite, consisting of the Social Democrat, Tácito, Partido Popular and Independent ministers and factional leaders closest to the President. The changes did not alter the factional distribution of government posts, which remained roughly the same (see Table 5.2.), but did call a halt to Suárez's process of accumulation of power around his closest advisors. In particular Martín Villa (with a power base of 30-40 deputies and vast influence in the provincial organisation of the party), and Fernández Ordóñez (leader of a faction of 23 deputies, including many of UCD's best technicians, and able to play on the feasibility of a coalition between the PSOE and his group to overthrow the UCD Government) were able to use their political resources against a weakened President in order to condition his choices<sup>95</sup>. The re-emergence of the barons and their new-found autonomy in relation to the weakened party leader reversed the process of presidentialisation.

Directly after the reshuffle, the PSOE tabled a censure motion against the new Government. The object of the motion was unmistakeably that of attacking Suárez on his weakest ground - Parliament - at a moment when he was facing strong criticism from within his party as a result of the Andalusian referendum. The attacks on Suárez which took place during this debate reached remarkable levels of verbal violence. Alfonso Guerra denounced him as incapable of operating in a democracy, whilst at the same time Fraga denounced him as incapable of keeping order<sup>96</sup>. The President was attacked from both sides, and there was

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<sup>94</sup> "Suárez: primer fracaso", *Cambio 16*, N.432, 16 March 1980, p.17.

<sup>95</sup> Throughout 1980, these two barons had opposed Suárez's approach to leadership and sought to weaken him into accepting a baronial style of party management (Interview with Alberto Oliart, September 1993).

<sup>96</sup> See *Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados*, Numbers 91-95, 20-30 May 1980, pp.5949-6294.

probably more than a degree of complicity between the PSOE and AP in their assault on Suárez's leadership. As Huneus has pointed out, in between attacks on the President Fraga and González exchanged statements of respect and mutual admiration<sup>97</sup>. In any case, it is evident that the weakening of UCD favoured both:

Por un lado AP es consciente que sin un debilitamiento de UCD no puede crecer (...), por otro lado el partido socialista comprende que todo lo que sea debilitar a UCD y ganar imagen de moderación es ganar electorado, y entonces se produce como una especie de entendimiento tácito entre AP y el PSOE de fomentar la debilidad o la división interna de UCD<sup>98</sup>.

This contrived form of bilateral opposition sought to capitalise on Suárez's difficulties in order to weaken UCD and exacerbate the internal conflict on party strategy. The UCD President's poor performance in responding to these attacks further undermined his leadership, and the censure debate damaged both Suárez's popularity and UCD's potential electoral support. In April 1980, opinion polls gave Suárez a 31% approval rating, against a 40% disapproval rating. By June 1980, a month after the censure motion, 48% disapproved of the President's performance, and only 26% approved<sup>99</sup>. This had a direct impact on the balance of power within the party elite: in July 1980 a meeting of the Permanent Commission saw a concerted assault on Suárez's leadership on the part of the barons (notably Martín Villa, Fernández Ordóñez, Garrigues and Landelino Lavilla) which had the intention of imposing Lavilla as President<sup>100</sup>. The barons argued for a coalitional style of party and government management, with negotiations between factions for the distribution of areas of power. In the words of Garrigues, "UCD no es un partido, es un compromiso que se hace todos los días. Quiero por tanto tener el poder suficiente no tanto para que Adolfo Suárez no sea el

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<sup>97</sup> For a full account see Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.282-297.

<sup>98</sup> Interview C34. The opinion poll ratings of both leaders improved considerably after the debate: González from 5.6 to 6.2, Fraga from 3.9 to 5.0 (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas data bank, published in Prieto and Barbería, El enigma del elefante, Op.cit., pp.294-296).

<sup>99</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.313.

<sup>100</sup> This meeting, famously known as the Casa de la Pradera, is the subject of many journalistic accounts: see in particular Josep Meliá, Así cayó Adolfo Suárez, Op.cit., pp.43-58; Joaquín Prieto and José Luis Barbería, El enigma del elefante: La conspiración del 23-F, Op.cit., pp.68-71.

presidente como para condicionarle en sus decisiones"<sup>101</sup>. The result of this meeting was a further Cabinet reshuffle in which the barons returned to ministerial office, putting an end to the presidentialist model of party and government management<sup>102</sup>. The presence of virtually the whole Permanent Commission in the Cabinet<sup>103</sup> marked the end of presidentialism and a recognition of the persistence of the factional diffusion present in the UCD genetic model. Whilst this Government maintained similar factional distribution of portfolios to its predecessors (with the Tácito faction losing some influence - see Table 5.3.), the return of the major barons marked the failure of Suárez's attempt to presidentialise party authority. The exclusion of some Tácitos also marked a shift in the party's dominant coalition, which could be interpreted as a shift to the left. The UCD right perceived this as a confirmation that their participation was not rewarded with significant influence over party objectives. Alongside the UCD Government's refusal to follow clearly conservative policies, the right-wing factions became increasingly dissatisfied with the incentives being offered for their involvement in the UCD project. This contributed to the creation of a front of internal opposition against the leadership in which the Tácitos were to play an important part.

Electoral weakness and the waning of Suárez's ability to provide popular solutions for political crises such as the autonomy question, added to his faults as an organisational leader and his lack of political direction, marked the end of the situational charisma he had enjoyed from 1976-78. Increasingly large sectors of the party no longer regarded him as indispensable for the successful continuation of democratic change, or for electoral mobilisation. In the words of an ex-minister,

Mientras a Suárez le salen bien las cosas nadie le discute dentro del propio partido, pero cuando empieza a tropezar con dificultades y no consigue responder a los problemas (...) se va creando dentro de UCD la sensación de que (...) Suárez ha servido genialmente para la transición, pero es más dudoso que sirva para gobernar ahora como líder<sup>104</sup>.

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<sup>101</sup> Meliá, *Así cayó Adolfo Suárez*, Op.cit., p.55. Above and beyond the accuracy of this account, all sources consulted confirmed that these comments reflect the substance of the meeting.

<sup>102</sup> See for instance the headline "El retorno de los barones", *Diario 16*, 9 September 1980, p.9.

<sup>103</sup> Only Garrigues, on the point of death, Lavilla (President of the Congress), Abril and Alvarez de Miranda were not ministers.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, June 1992.

The centralisation of control over organisational resources therefore ceased to be a source of interdependence and cohesion between the UCD factions. In this context the inappropriateness of the party statutes, which concentrated power around the party President, became increasingly evident, causing unrest within the organisation, and particularly in the parliamentary group.

#### 4.2. Opposition to presidentialism: the UCD parliamentary group

An important source of opposition to the presidentialist project was the UCD parliamentary group in the Congress, which remained the principal forum of factional activity within the party. The exclusion of the barons from the 3rd UCD Government was particularly damaging to the party's parliamentary cohesion. In the Constituent Legislature, the mediation between the parliamentarians of the various factions and the Government was guaranteed by the presence of the factional leaders in the Council of Ministers. The parliamentary group was not consulted over legislation on a collective basis. Instead, only the individual deputies with direct responsibilities over the legislation (the ponentes) had the opportunity to discuss the measures with the corresponding minister, and to cooperate with him in the passage of the bill through the Chamber. In the words of the Secretary General, "más que una conexión institucional grupo parlamentario-Gobierno, lo que había era una diversificación de la relación por razones funcionales. Había una conexión permanente Gobierno - diputados encargados de los temas"<sup>105</sup>.

This was in fact a means of obviating conflict by compartmentalising the parliamentary group in its relationship with the Government. Not only were individual deputies alone in no position to challenge aspects of legislation proposed by ministers, but the selection of the ponente was a decision of the minister. The consequence of this was that Government-parliamentary group coordination of specific bills took place within factional boundaries:

No hay, para empezar, una discusión entre Gobierno y Grupo Parlamentario respecto de los anteproyectos legislativos y tampoco de los proyectos. Una vez que un proyecto de Ley llega al Congreso se establece una relación directa y casi única entre el ministro correspondiente y "su" ponente (...) escogido de entre los diputados componentes de la

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<sup>105</sup> Interview with Arias Salgado, June 1992.

tendencia afín. (...) Al final del proceso legislativo sucedía que las decisiones del Grupo eran tomadas por el ponente correspondiente en estrecha unión con el ministro y sólo en momentos críticos de extrema dificultad se reunía el ministro con el Grupo Parlamentario para pedirles el voto al proyecto<sup>106</sup>.

This is practically a coalitional arrangement, in which each faction used its representation in the Council of Ministers to pursue its own programme, coordinating legislation through factional members in Parliament. For instance, Fernández Ordóñez later described the Fiscal Reform as "una de las piezas maestras de nuestro programa socialdemócrata", suggesting that factions had distinct programmes, and that some laws could be seen as policy payoffs for a particular faction within the UCD coalition, rather than policies supported by all the factions<sup>107</sup>. Such a system was highly unstable in that individual ministers could plan legislation which could be totally unacceptable to ministers, and parliamentarians, from opposing factions. Consequently this arrangement required a vigorous and authoritative coordinating role on the part of the President, in order to fix the limits to policy freedom of the various ministers, and to ensure the discipline of the parliamentary group in voting legislation inspired by the different rival factions.

The absence of the factional leaders from the Government made this system difficult to sustain. First, discussions in the Council of Ministers were inadequate to ensure parliamentary cohesion, because the ministers representing the factions were not the factional leaders (barons) and had insufficient authority over "their" parliamentarians. Second, the barons, consigned to the backbenches, were determined to recover their positions, and used their authority over the deputies they had helped to elect in order to hinder Government activity. As one UCD leader states:

Podía existir un señor que tenía 14 diputados, (...) claro, en el momento en que Suárez prescindía de algún miembro de alguno de esos sectores del partido, el Gobierno se resentía parlamentariamente, porque, en fin, los parlamentarios que dominaban esas personas, pues obviamente no asistían a las sesiones, tenían extrañas enfermedades, compromisos. La desaparición de esas personas del gobierno comportó que, a mediados del 79 (...) empezaran a jugar dentro del

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<sup>106</sup> Diego López Garrido, "Gobierno y Parlamento: Dos modelos de relaciones internas (UCD y PSOE)", in El Gobierno en la Constitución española y en los Estatutos de Autonomía, Diputación de Barcelona, 1985, pp.231-243 (p.234).

<sup>107</sup> Fernández Ordóñez, La España necesaria, Op.cit., p.79. In fact, as seen in Chapter 3, the Fiscal Reform was not well-received in the more conservative sectors of UCD.

partido una oposición<sup>108</sup>.

The conflict between factional leaders and the President further weakened the 3rd UCD Government, emphasising that the strong presence of the original UCD factions in the parliamentary group set a limit to Suárez's pretensions to concentrate all party and Government power around the Presidency. In the last resort, the "potential for blackmail"<sup>109</sup> of the factional leaders constituted an important resource in the power games played within the party elite, particularly given the tight margins of the Government's majority in the post-constituent period. The end of consensus created a climate in which the vulnerability of a minority Government to parliamentary attacks became immediately evident. This created a situation in which the opposition to a specific policy of even a handful of deputies could lead to a parliamentary defeat. As a result, the marginal value of each deputy's vote was increased, undermining the willingness of the parliamentary group to passively accept Government impositions. This confirmed that a major weakness of the presidentialist project was its failure to "presidentialise" the parliamentary elite of the party, which was still dominated by the factional diffusion present at the party's origins. In particular it demonstrated the limits of majoritarian decision-making structures in the absence of basic agreement over party policy. Whilst in the Executive, and even to an extent the Council of Ministers, a majority decision could be imposed on the minority, in the parliamentary group the agreement, or at least acquiescence, of every deputy was required if the Government was not to be defeated. Although the decision to vote against the leadership's instructions would not be taken lightly, the emergence of profound divergences over policy, and the lack of coherent leadership, made rebellion feasible.

The cohesion of the UCD group was also increasingly put to the test by the attitude of its parliamentary opponents. The PSOE combined its attacks on Suárez and the Government with overtures to the Social Democratic sectors of the UCD, and particularly Social Democrat ministers<sup>110</sup>. These overtures may have extended to influence over the policy lines adopted by these ministers, nearly all in economic portfolios. In the same way

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<sup>108</sup> Interview C44 (partly cited in Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.445).

<sup>109</sup> The expression used by Gunther, *ibid*.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.



Christian Democrats and other conservatives in UCD received overtures from the right. AP-CD was going through a similar process to that of the PSOE, consisting of the abandonment of extremist overtones and the adoption of a moderate language aimed at seducing the centre vote<sup>111</sup>. AP's strategy involved contacts with the most conservative sectors of UCD, in order to negotiate a durable coalition which would anchor UCD to the right and provide parliamentary stability for a basically conservative government - an operation known as the "gran derecha" or "mayoría natural". However, the risk of such an operation was not only that UCD's centrist image could be put in danger, but that the Social Democrat wing of UCD under Fernández Ordóñez would refuse to join such a coalition, instead using it as an excuse to leave UCD<sup>112</sup>. What these developments meant was that discontented UCD parliamentarians could leave the party and be welcomed into credible alternative political forces, capable of providing them with a career and perhaps greater organisational influence. This kind of behaviour had been legitimised by the refusal of the President of the Congress - the future critic Lavilla - to accept the undated letter of resignation signed by Manuel Clavero after his reelection in 1979. This decision established that parliamentarians had no juridical ties of loyalty to their party, and could dispose of their seats as they wished<sup>113</sup>. The emergence of exit options for UCD subgroups reduced their dependency on the organisation and its leadership, weakening the party's internal coherence.

What requires explanation is why Adolfo Suárez failed to make use of the ample powers afforded him as President of UCD to override the authority of the barons and unite the UCD parliamentary group behind the Government. According to the statutes of the party, the President of UCD was also the President of the parliamentary groups. Since he obviously did not have time to lead the group<sup>114</sup> while presiding over the Government, Suárez did not

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<sup>111</sup> See José Ramón Montero, "Los fracasos políticos y electorales de la derecha española, AP 1976-1986", Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 39, July-September 1987.

<sup>112</sup> See the interpretation of Martín Villa, Al servicio del Estado, Op.cit., p.76.

<sup>113</sup> Jorge de Esteban, "El fenómeno español del transfuguismo político y la jurisprudencia constitucional", Revista de Estudios Políticos, 70, 1990, pp.7-32.

<sup>114</sup> Although this applies to both parliamentary groups, here I refer principally to the group in the Congress, unless otherwise stated.

exercise this Presidency in person<sup>115</sup> - the presidential powers were delegated in the parliamentary Spokesman. The President delegated the direction of the group to his closest advisors: in the Constituent Legislature, the Spokesman was Pérez-Llorca, and in the First Legislature until October 1980, it was a Liberal close to the President, Jiménez Blanco. The weekly meetings of the group were prepared by the Spokesman, the Secretary General Arias Salgado, and the Vice-President Fernando Abril, guaranteeing presidential control over parliamentary activity. These meetings were "simplemente informativas de la política del Gobierno"<sup>116</sup>, and did not offer any real possibility of influencing Government policy<sup>117</sup>.

However, this channel of presidential influence was not used to strengthen the Government's parliamentary position. Suárez's unwillingness to attend Parliament and defend Government policy meant that the potential of the President's statutory leadership of the parliamentary group was not exploited. Instead, the system broke down when the President ceased to coordinate parliamentary activity through his delegates. A parliamentary group, if it is to act coherently as the legislative support of a government, must be provided with a constant supply of information on government activities<sup>118</sup>, especially in cases where there is no solid base of internal consensus on policy. According to one UCD leader, the President simply stopped taking decisions on which the Spokesman could inform:

Cuando el portavoz del grupo se iba a despachar con el presidente y volvía al grupo y decía que se le había planteado un problema y que el presidente lo resolvía, el grupo lo aceptaba. Lo que empieza a ocurrir, es que el portavoz del grupo empieza a filtrar que cada vez que le lleva un problema al presidente del partido no le da nunca respuesta, esto progresivamente va calando, y allí hay un presidente que no está dispuesto a presidir el grupo ni siquiera arbitrando los problemas más importantes, lo cual deteriora su imagen en el grupo parlamentario, porque se va forjando la opinión de que no resuelve sobre nada porque no es capaz de resolver sobre nada<sup>119</sup>.

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<sup>115</sup> According to an advisor, "Suárez nunca jamás se reunió con el Grupo Parlamentario. No hablaba con los diputados" (Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992).

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>117</sup> As Martín Villa has recognised, "muy pocos éramos los miembros del Gobierno que acudíamos a informar a nuestros compañeros, y casi nunca a conocer sus iniciativas" (*Al servicio del Estado*, Op.cit., p.83).

<sup>118</sup> See Pedro Jover and Joan Marcet, "Teoría y realidad en las relaciones del Gobierno con el Grupo Parlamentario y el partido mayoritarios", in *El Gobierno en la Constitución Española y en los Estatutos de Autonomía*, Op.cit., pp.265-285 (p.277).

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

The unease in the parliamentary group can be explained up to a point by the manoeuvres of the barons to recover their governmental positions. But Suárez's failure to offer a leadership style consistent with the wide powers attributed to him by the UCD party statutes left the parliamentary group paralysed in a moment of great political difficulty.

The principal complaint of UCD parliamentarians was that Suárez had no coherent project to present to Parliament after the passing of the Constitution, and as a result was incapable of sustaining a political line in Parliament. This was in large part a consequence of the President's personal failings: "Suárez era un pésimo líder parlamentario, tenía miedo al Parlamento. Y consiguientemente eso producía una sensación de desamparo, de fragilidad, de falta de solidez"<sup>120</sup>. The President's poor parliamentary performances included refusing to answer the opposition's calls for an investiture debate after the 1979 election victory, and leaving the bulk of the responsibility for replying to the 1980 censure motion to his ministers. This failure to offer political direction was symbolised by his unwillingness to attend Parliament; as Martín Villa writes "(los diputados) nunca contarían con la sombra benéfica de un líder capaz de dar respuestas a la oposición como exige la democracia parlamentaria"<sup>121</sup>. This left the parliamentary group helpless in the face of the intense opposition carried out by the PSOE. As one ex-UCD deputy asserts,

en el Grupo Parlamentario la sensación dominante era de amargura. Se sentía la pérdida de capacidad política. Un Grupo Parlamentario amargado sin líder. Un franquista en frente de un partido socialista radicalizado, tenía siempre un complejo mortal, cuando además resulta que no se tenía ni la capacidad dialéctica ni retórica ni la capacidad intelectual suficiente como para comparecer en el Parlamento, entonces la situación es catastrófica<sup>122</sup>.

This abdication of leadership responsibilities in the important arena of Parliament<sup>123</sup> was a key source of internal opposition. In the words of one of Suárez's critics,

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<sup>120</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>121</sup> Martín Villa, *Al servicio del Estado*, Op.cit., p.90. In 1980, Suárez failed to attend three quarters of parliamentary votes (Attard, *Vida y muerte de UCD*, Op.cit., p.179).

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>123</sup> For the importance of Parliament in legitimising democratic practices, see Julián Santamaría, "El papel del Parlamento durante la consolidación de la democracia y después", *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 84, April-June 1994, pp.9-26.

La imagen de líder carismático con capacidad creativa, con aportación de soluciones, y con dirección política, esa imagen entra en crisis interna, y le sustituye una imagen de un líder de cartón. (...) Todo eso fue minando su liderato en el grupo parlamentario. Dejar a 168 diputados sin cabeza es peligrosísimo<sup>124</sup>.

Discontent in the parliamentary group began to be expressed by increased absenteeism, and even voting indiscipline leading to parliamentary defeats. These in turn undermined the Government. For example, in November 1979 UCD deputies from several regions abandoned the Chamber during the debate on the State Budget permitting credits to local corporations, because they were in disagreement with the territorial distribution of these credits<sup>125</sup>. This allowed an opposition amendment to go through, indicating a growing independence of UCD parliamentarians from the dictates of the Government, and forcing a significant adjustment to the latter's budgetary calculations.

The limits of parliamentary discipline in the UCD group were brought home by the election to replace Jiménez Blanco as UCD parliamentary spokesman, held in October 1980. Miguel Herrero stood against the "official", presidentially sponsored candidate, the Social Democrat Rodríguez-Miranda, and won by 103 to 45 votes. Herrero's critical position towards the party leadership was well-known<sup>126</sup>, and the vote in his favour can only be interpreted as a vote against the presidential model of party organisation which ignored the parliamentary group, taking its discipline for granted. Moreover, the choice of spokesman was very significant for parliamentary strategy; Rodríguez-Miranda would have favoured cooperation with the PSOE, whilst Herrero had made no secret of his project for closer relations with AP-CD. The fact that Martín Villa and Landelino Lavilla had supported Herrero<sup>127</sup>, whilst Suárez and Fernández Ordóñez had backed Rodríguez-Miranda, represented a deep split within the dominant coalition, in which Social Democrats, Tácitos and Independents were the

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<sup>124</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>125</sup> "El ausentismo de UCD puede costarle al Gobierno avalar créditos de hasta 58.000 millones de pesetas", *El País*, 30 November 1979, p.14.

<sup>126</sup> See for example Miguel Herrero, "Sí, pero...", *El País*, 19 September 1980, p.18; and his speech to the UCD parliamentary group on the occasion of his election as spokesman, reproduced in Miguel Herrero, *Ideas para moderados*, Op.cit., pp.132-135.

<sup>127</sup> Martín Villa himself voted for Herrero, and it can be assumed that he suggested his supporters did the same: Martín Villa, *Al servicio del Estado*, Op.cit., p.91. The lists of proposers and seconders of the candidates, an accurate reflection of factional positions, can be found in Attard, *Vida y muerte de UCD*, Op.cit., p.181.

most important factions<sup>128</sup>. The impossibility of agreement on such a fundamental aspect of government direction left the Cabinet paralysed.

The election of Herrero meant that the leadership of the parliamentary group was discordant with the leadership of the party and the Government. This was dysfunctional to the effective management of the parliamentary party, since the President of the party was the formal leader of the group, and the spokesman exercised this authority by delegation. The democratic legitimacy afforded to Herrero by the overwhelming support of the UCD deputies made this statutory delegation meaningless, revealing the inappropriateness of presidentialist statutes in the absence of an authoritative leader. The President, whose inability to control party and Government and mark their political direction was now beyond dispute, faced a party whose statutes left him with the principal responsibility of running the organisation, without the political authority to do so. The weakness of the President's position is emphasised by the fact that he lacked a substantial independent power base in the parliamentary group; less than a third of the group voted for Suárez's candidate, and 23 of them were simply expressing loyalty towards the Social Democrat faction. The result of this internal election demonstrated that the party barons still had the resources to mediate between the Presidency and the UCD parliamentary group, and that Suárez's refusal to negotiate over the internal distribution of power would be punished by factional leaders. The project of presidentialisation ground to a halt in the absence of a dominant leadership figure to direct it.

## 5. Conclusion

At the foundation of UCD, many participants in the coalition explicitly stated that their involvement had the sole aim of providing Spain with a democratic Constitution. This meant that diverse ideological and policy positions were subordinated to this greater goal, which facilitated the convergence of objectives and the acceptance of Suárez's centralised leadership. In the post-constituent period, this unifying factor was absent and it became evident that the presidential authority which held the organisation together was built on fragile foundations.

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<sup>128</sup> This split, and Suárez's lack of authority within the dominant coalition, is demonstrated by the fact that several members of the Cabinet voted against the candidate supported by the President (7 or 8, according to Oscar Alzaga: Interview, May 1992).

With the failure of the party leader to distribute sufficient organisational incentives, ideological divergences re-emerged provoking internal tensions over Government policy and undermining internal coherence. The party's electoral failures emphasised that Suárez's popularity, which had made UCD the only feasible vehicle for achieving parliamentary representation in 1977-79, was no longer such an effective source of electoral support.

Suárez's decline was probably unavoidable given the dependency of his leadership position on a peculiar set of political circumstances. The UCD leader's dominance was the result of his successful stewarding of the initial phases of the transition process, and persisted as long as the atmosphere of elite consensus and restraint was maintained. The passing of the Constitution effectively marked the achievement of Suárez's political project, leaving him without a clear set of objectives. At the same time, those elites, both within and outside UCD, which had collaborated in this project, began to pursue their own aims and interests, which tended to place them in conflict with Suárez. The transition process had developed in such a way as to make Suárez indispensable to the successful conclusion of political reform. With the end of the constituent process, Suárez lost his pivotal position and became vulnerable to his political opponents.

However, explaining Suárez's decline does not amount to explaining UCD's collapse; what must be explained is the party's inability to generate a new dominant coalition capable of distributing adequate benefits to participating groups. The key to understanding this problem is that the organisational structure of the party did not provide for the channelling of factional activity or the systematic coordination of groups with divergent aims. The decline of Adolfo Suárez's leadership brought the collapse of a model of party management which had emerged out of his initial dominance of the organisation, and which depended on his continued dominance to function effectively. This shows that structures which are appropriate for one period can become inappropriate in another. As Arias Salgado has recognised:

El modelo burocrático autoritario (...) es una fórmula útil para un proceso de construcción, tanto del propio partido como de las instituciones democráticas, pero es un sistema muy pobre, muy cerrada sobre sí mismo. (...) Esto viene provocado fundamentalmente por la existencia de liderazgos muy fuertes y carismáticos. UCD tendría que haber sido así. Una de las razones por las cuales no cuajó el proyecto fue porque no se ejerció suficientemente el liderazgo en los términos en los que se ejerció en el partido socialista<sup>129</sup>.

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<sup>129</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

The political and organisational failures of 1979-80 discredited the presidentialist party statutes, and destroyed the leadership which had brought the UCD component groups together within a unitary party. In the context of the organisational developments outlined in Chapter 4, this situation of crisis was seized upon by the marginalised minority factions as an opportunity to recover their positions and force a return to a more coalitional style of party management. For the more conservative factions, this was a prelude to pushing the party to the right, or even integrating it into a broad conservative coalition with Fraga's AP. The position adopted by these factions proved impossible to accommodate within the existing party structures, making serious conflict inevitable.





## **CHAPTER 6: INTERNAL POLARISATION: THE CRITICAL MOVEMENT AND THE 2ND UCD CONGRESS**

### **1. Introduction**

The collapse of presidential authority brought a polarisation of the internal debate, with the creation of an internal opposition known as the "critical movement". This created a situation of grave internal conflict, in which the party's direction was the subject of fierce debate, and no one faction or group of factions was in a position to impose a solution acceptable to the rest of the organisation. Huneus explains this conflict in terms of the failure to sustain a consociational style of party management:

La erosión del liderazgo de Suárez generó enormes tensiones y conflictos que provocaron una crisis del método consociacional de regulación del conflicto interno. (...) Cuando se cuestionó su liderazgo sobre la base empírica de que la ciudadanía estaba disconforme con su labor, UCD entró en crisis como partido consociacional. La polarización interna planteó la necesidad de aplicar otra estrategia de regulación del conflicto: de la estrategia consociacional se debía pasar a la estrategia mayoritaria<sup>1</sup>.

Here I propose a different interpretation. As argued earlier, the consociational strategy had never really been applied within UCD; instead the presidential model of party organisation had imposed a logic closer to that of the majoritarian strategy. Internal coherence under this model required that presidential authority was exercised with the consent of the vast majority of organisational actors. The collapse of leadership autonomy (in the form of Suárez's declining popular support and his inability to distribute sufficient organisational incentives to his party elite) undermined this consent, and polarisation emerged as a result of the conservative critics' refusal to accept the party's majoritarian structures. This Chapter examines the critics' demands for greater organisational voice, and the conflict it provoked at the 2nd party Congress. The aim is to explain the causes of internal conflict, and the reasons why this conflict was not resolved, with such damaging consequences for the future of the organisation.

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<sup>1</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.314.

## **2. Policy-making in a divided party: External pressures and internal conflict**

### **2.1. The search for party goals: An ideological division**

Opposition to the presidential model of party management focused on the excessive concentration of power around the party leader. However it would be a simplification to see this opposition as a mere "struggle for power"<sup>2</sup>. Conflict was the result of intense disagreement over the political objectives for which organisational resources were to be employed once the common aim of the democratic Constitution had been achieved. The potential for such a conflict had always been present in UCD, as examination of the tax-parties' policy documents and the internal dynamics of the first two UCD Governments has shown. The end of the constituent process and lack of leadership direction after 1979 left a vacuum over policy definition, which caused government paralysis and the resulting crisis in the distribution of organisational incentives<sup>3</sup>. A new set of party goals was needed in order to maintain participation and justify the party's existence. The latent left-right division in UCD emerged as the subgroups competed to impose their political objectives on the organisation. This process has been described as follows:

Cuando el grupo parlamentario ve la falta de solidez del liderazgo, lo que produce fue una diversificación de propuestas, entonces hay una tensión en una segunda fase muy clara entre lo que era la socialdemocracia y lo que era la democracia cristiana. En esa tensión, la socialdemocracia tiende a identificarse con la propuesta llamada progresista, y la democracia cristiana es la más conservadora. (...) En el Congreso de Palma, esas tensiones se cristalizan, se cristalizan y además no se solucionan<sup>4</sup>.

There are few large political parties in which left-right, pragmatist-purist divisions are absent. What requires explanation is that in the case of UCD the organisation was incapable of keeping these tensions under control.

Part of the reason is that in the post-constituent period, and in particular from 1980 onwards, these divisions were complicated by external factors. Conflict over policy objectives

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<sup>2</sup> As argued for example by Javier del Moral, *El centro de la derecha*, Madrid, Eudema, 1991, pp.34-61.

<sup>3</sup> In line with the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 1, this analysis is focused on the distribution of collective incentives, in particular policy payoffs. Section 4 of this Chapter addresses alternative explanations, and suggests they have lesser explanatory power.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

was aggravated by the influence of external organisations - the Church hierarchy and business interests - on the internal balance of power in the UCD elite. In the constituent period, external support had on rare occasions reduced the centralisation of political resources around the Presidency by increasing the weight of the more marginalised sectors of Liberals and Christian Democrats. The decline of Suárez, whose dominant position in the 1977-78 period had been the source of UCD's initial autonomy, left the organisation exposed to external pressures from interest groups such as the CEOE, which by 1980 had become an influential organisation on the Spanish right, and the Episcopal Conference, which was moving away from the political neutrality it had adopted at the beginning of the transition. These developments undermined UCD's organisational stability in various ways. By seeking to exert public pressure on the UCD Government to adopt more conservative policies, these groups threatened the party's ability to define its objectives from a position of autonomy. This decline in organisational autonomy also threatened internal coherence: the contacts these groups maintained with conservative sectors within UCD affected the balance of power within the organisation, although the party's structures failed to accommodate this. In this way external pressures underlined internal pressures, and the potential mediating role conservative sub-groups could play between UCD and powerful external groups provided them with control over a key zone of organisational uncertainty. Sub-group autonomy was also increased by the emergence of exit-options, in the form of the CEOE's ability to sponsor a new centre-right political formation, in which UCD conservatives would play a prominent role. According to the model of party development elaborated in Chapter 1, the emergence of exit options reduces sub-group interdependency and allows potential dissidents to exact a higher price, in terms of organisational influence, for their continued participation. This dynamic can certainly be identified within UCD in 1980-82, and had the effect of increasing conflict over party objectives. However, the emergence of exit options had a particularly destabilising effect on UCD as a result of the ultimately destructive intentions of some sub-group leaders. Rather than using the implicit threat of exit as a bargaining counter, some UCD elite members seemed determined to make use of their exit options as part of a broader political strategy to polarise the Spanish party system. These factors created a centrifugal dynamic within the party, which can be shown by examining the most conflictual policy questions facing UCD in the 1979-80 period.

## 2.2. "El desquite": UCD's relationship with business sectors

The intervention of external forces led to an intensification of the internal debate on economic policy. Conservative sectors of the party complained that the Government was following an economic policy unfavourable to the interests of the middle-classes who had voted for UCD. As one critic argued:

El programa de UCD era un programa liberal-conservador (...) y en cambio hizo una política de centro-izquierda, en temas económicos y sociales. (...) Los temas económicos fueron tratados con gran frivolidad, cediendo permanentemente a las presiones del PSOE<sup>5</sup>.

In fact, economic indicators for the period suggest that UCD did indeed follow an economic policy unlikely to satisfy the wealthier social groups. The massive increase in unemployment - which doubled from 6.3% in 1977 to 12.6% in 1980, and continued to rise afterwards - threatened to provoke social tensions which could have undermined the unconsolidated democratic system. Successive UCD Governments responded by bolstering the Social Security system, little equipped for a situation of mass unemployment.

The costs of this policy were met largely by entrepreneurs and investors. Social Security contributions were increased, hiking up labour costs; at the same time, the tax increases brought by the 1977 Fiscal Reform continued to target the wealthy, accustomed to low taxes on high incomes and capital gains. Most controversially, the Public Sector deficit was allowed to expand to meet social transfer payments, and to sustain unprofitable public companies whose closure would have aggravated the recession. The deficit had particularly damaging effects because of its accelerated growth over a very short period: whilst in 1975 the deficit was non-existent, it grew from 0.6% of GNP in 1977 to 2.1% in 1980<sup>6</sup>. As a result, the private sector, used to artificially cheap credit under Francoism, faced a scarcity of funds for investment and a consequent sharp rise in interest rates<sup>7</sup>. The growth in the

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<sup>5</sup> Interview C31.

<sup>6</sup> Juergen B.Donges, "La insuficiencia de productividad en la economía española: causas y remedios", in Juan Linz (ed.), España, un presente para el futuro, Op.cit., pp.97-124 (Cuadro 1.).

<sup>7</sup> José Diego Teigeiro, "Pasado, presente y futuro del sistema financiero español", in Eduardo García de Enterría (ed.), España, un presente para el futuro. 2. Las instituciones, Madrid, Instituto de Estudios Económicos, 1984, pp.325-368 (p.349).

deficit hit the most powerful private banks, who were also infuriated by moves to reform the financial sector such as the opening up of the Spanish banking system to foreign competition<sup>8</sup>.

The Spanish business sector was therefore unlikely to applaud UCD economic policy. Particularly irritating to these sectors were the tax increases they faced as a result of fiscal reform, whilst the Government continued to increase deficit spending and sponsor inflationary pay rises in collective bargaining. The effects of these policies were that UCD's response to the recession brought a significant redistribution of the country's increasingly scarce resources from the richest to the poorest social groups. In the period 1974-80, 8.48% of national income was redistributed from the richest 30% of families to the remaining 70%, with the biggest gains made by the poorest 40%. This reflected the increasing weight of salaries and social transfers in the country's income, tax rises for higher income groups, and the decline in capital gains<sup>9</sup>.

These developments were attributed to the role of prominent Social Democrats in economic ministries, a source of acute discontent on the right of the party. Social Democrat control over economic policy was partly a response to the threat that Fernández Ordóñez could abandon UCD to join the PSOE, and partly the result of Suárez's own enthusiasm for a more "progressive" political discourse, which was increasingly out of step with the demands of financial and business interests. One deputy states that "Suárez se va acercando hacia propuestas cada vez más convencionalmente de izquierdas. El se deja aconsejar por el lado socialdemócrata, y esa inclinación va produciendo desafección varia por parte de los sectores industriales y económicos"<sup>10</sup>. The Social Democrat influence on UCD's economic policy was real: in its five years of government, the weight of the public sector in the Spanish economy grew from 30% to 40%<sup>11</sup>, and the Fiscal Reform was particularly unpopular in business

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<sup>8</sup> See Robert Martínez, "The business sector and political change in Spain: Apertura, Reforma, and democratic consolidation", in Richard Gunther (ed.), Politics, society and democracy: The case of Spain, Boulder, Westview, 1993, pp.113-139 (p.134).

<sup>9</sup> Julio Alcaide Inchausti, "La distribución de la renta en España", in Juan Linz (ed.), España, un presente para el futuro, Op.cit., pp.125-150 (p.141).

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>11</sup> Víctor Pérez-Díaz, "Los empresarios y la clase política", in Papeles de Economía Española, 22, 1985, pp.5-37 (p.9).

sectors<sup>12</sup>. One Christian Democrat deputy complained that

no es posible que en un partido centrista el peso de una serie de decisiones políticas básicas esté en manos del sector socialdemócrata, falta una cierta clarificación. (...) El voto moderado español, que es un voto por otra parte muy conservador en algunos sentidos, ha sido utilizado para que un núcleo muy concreto haga una política que no tiene nada que ver con la que ese electorado creyó votar en un momento determinado. La ideología del partido es una ideología muy razonable (...). Lo que ocurre es que el nivel de coherencia de la acción del Gobierno con sus postulados es mínimo<sup>13</sup>.

Whilst it is not clear to what extent the UCD electorate was as conservative as this respondent claimed, this argument gained credibility with the failure of UCD economic policy to meet the consensus of the parties of the left or the trade unions. In the delicate political situation of the transition, the Government could not afford to totally ignore the pressures of the left, as industrial unrest could undermine political stability; however the unions were not prepared to offer explicit support to UCD. Economic policy in this period therefore failed to win the support of any social group, with the Government taking the blame for the hardship of both workers and investors. Moreover, the lack of a coherent project to address the crisis (due to divisions within the Government) meant that the flow of collective incentives to the party elite was seriously compromised.

In this context, the intervention of the CEOE in the UCD internal debate had a destabilising effect. Huneus has argued against "imputar causalidad a la CEOE en el desplome de UCD, pues sus fundamentos se encuentran en su interior" suggesting instead that it was simply "un acelerador de la crisis y descomposición de UCD"<sup>14</sup>. But to suggest that the role of the CEOE was merely that of a catalyst is to ignore the difficulties with the economic powers that marked UCD's period in office from the beginning, with direct consequences for the internal stability of the party, as seen in the Cabinet reshuffles of February 1978 and May and September 1980. In the course of the transition the increasingly representative and well-organised CEOE acquired a political weight it had lacked at the time

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<sup>12</sup> Ferrer Salat stated that "la reforma fiscal que nosotros apoyábamos no es ésta que se ha hecho. La reforma ha incidido (...) penalizando la inversión y el ahorro": in interview "nuestra confianza en el Gobierno la votaremos día a día", El País, 20 September 1980, pp.34-35.

<sup>13</sup> Interview B2.

<sup>14</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.373.

of UCD's foundation. By 1981 1,250,000 firms were affiliated, representing 80% of employment in Spain, and as early as 1979 it had signed agreements with UGT<sup>15</sup>. This made the CEOE the most important representative of Spanish business, and therefore it could not be ignored in formulating economic policy. Moreover, the CEOE and business sectors were an important part of UCD's own electoral support: in 1979 65% of chief executives, and 57.8% of CEOE association leaders voted for UCD<sup>16</sup>. On this basis, the CEOE (somewhat extravagantly) presented itself as the voice of the UCD social base.

In spite of this, Suárez marked his distances from the CEOE leadership and representatives of the big banks, often refusing to receive them, or making them wait months for a meeting. Although the CEOE was hardly an accurate reflection of the views of all UCD's supporters, this can be seen as cutting off the possibility of a part of UCD's social base expressing its dissatisfaction "from within", before withdrawing support. In response, this expression of voice began to take less constructive tones, and from 1979 on an increasing number of documents were published by the CEOE openly criticising the Government's economic policy<sup>17</sup>. The divisions over economic policy within UCD had existed from the beginning, but in 1980, with the active intervention of powerful interest groups on the behalf of UCD conservatives, the internal balance of power shifted. The President's position within the organisation was so weakened that the exclusion of Fernando Abril from the 5th UCD Government was a decision openly imposed by the CEOE<sup>18</sup>. His replacement with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, close to several banks and major companies, as Economic Vice-President, was an attempt to impose a line in economic policy to the liking of business and financial sectors. A Government of the centre-right lacking in trade union support and constantly attacked by conservative business interests was in a difficult position in formulating economic policy. In this context the close contacts that the Liberals and Christian Democrats maintained with business interests emerged as an important organisational resource which they could use to pressurise Suárez for increased influence. The growing importance of the CEOE and the

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<sup>15</sup> Martínez and Pardo Avellaneda, "El asociacionismo español en la transición", Op.cit., pp.84-89.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Martínez, "The business sector and political change in Spain", Op.cit., p.127.

<sup>17</sup> See for instance the attacks on the Government's monetary and fiscal policies in CEOE, Memorandum de la CEOE al Gobierno, Madrid, 1979.

<sup>18</sup> See Manuel Mella Márquez, "Los grupos de interés en la consolidación democrática", Op.cit., p.342.

desperate state of the economy made it much more difficult to ignore such pressures than had been the case in 1977-79.

The CEOE did not limit its intervention to government matters: business sectors were not only unhappy with UCD's economic policy, but also with its electoral prospects. An important source of UCD's independence in its initial phase had been its autonomous control over key resources for electoral mobilisation, which had left conservative business circles with little choice but to support Suárez and the UCD as the best way of defeating the left. In 1977 and 1979 the major Spanish banks provided UCD with significant financial contributions towards the cost of its electoral campaigns, negotiated by the CEOE as intermediary. These contributions were not rewarded with any particularly favourable treatment from UCD Governments, to the disgust of the banks. They expected to be consulted on economic policy, and were therefore furious that Suárez chose to leave much of economic policy in the hands of the Social Democrat faction:

La Banca no se contentó de UCD, porque en España la Banca y los poderes económicos han estado siempre acostumbrados a tener una influencia mayor que la que incluso se tiene en otros países de Europa. Había una falta de cultura democrática y la Banca tenía la teoría, si yo le presto el dinero y no se lo reclamo lo menos que puede hacer es hacer caso a lo que yo le digo<sup>19</sup>.

The most important priority of the Spanish right was to maintain political stability and prevent the PSOE from reaching power, and until 1979 the UCD under Suárez was successful in doing this. This placed the business sector in a position of dependency on the UCD, and particularly on its leader, who concentrated government power and capacity for electoral mobilisation around a small dominant coalition. The autonomy UCD enjoyed from business sectors in the 1977-79 period can be seen in the "progressive" nature of some of its policies (fiscal reform and welfare spending) and the "concessions" made to the left in the constituent process. Whilst this autonomy was sustained and Suárez's leadership remained strong, the business sector's discontent at some of these policies was not translated into action against him, as Martín Villa confirms: "mientras las cosas en el seno de UCD fueron bien, la derecha de los intereses, le gustara o no algunas de nuestras soluciones, permanecía quietecita"<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Martín Villa, September 1993.



With the decline of Suárez's leadership and UCD's political and electoral failures, an opportunity to push the party in a new direction emerged, as the relation of dependency was reversed. In these conditions, the business community no longer felt obliged to tolerate UCD's "concessions" to the left. As one ex-UCD minister explains,

La derecha española está en el año 74, 75 atemorizada por lo que pueda ocurrir en el país a la muerte de Franco. (...) Cuando Suárez le presenta una alternativa de cambio sin trauma, se va con Suárez. Cuando Suárez no hace una política de derecha sino una política que solo en parte satisface a ese electorado, entonces ahí el desquite. (...) Entonces hay un movimiento de apoyo hacia Fraga, pensando que en vez de ceder el 30% pues se podría haber cedido el 5%<sup>21</sup>.

When UCD no longer seemed capable of stopping the Socialists, conservative business interests set about forcing a change in the political configuration of the space to the right of the PSOE, in an attempt at preventing the election of a left-wing government.

The intervention of the CEOE was aimed at the creation of a single political force to combat the left, by merging UCD with AP to create the "gran derecha" or "mayoría natural". Whilst UCD had been recognised as the main alternative to the left in 1977-79, some banks had given considerable financial support to AP, and the leadership of the CEOE was also politically closer to AP than to UCD; in the words of Calvo Sotelo, "la CEOE nació sesgada hacia la derecha y sensibilizada políticamente contra UCD"<sup>22</sup>. According to survey data, over half of a sample of CEOE association leaders voted for UCD in 1977, but over a quarter voted for AP<sup>23</sup>. This was an important reservoir of support for AP, which grew in response to business unease with UCD and with Suárez, encouraged by the CEOE leadership. By pushing UCD towards an alliance with Fraga, business sectors hoped to replace the centre-leaning UCD with a much more conservative organisation under a different leadership<sup>24</sup>. The aim was to turn the most successful Spanish party into a vehicle for the defence of business

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<sup>21</sup> Interview C36. Carlos Moyas offers a similar interpretation: "La gran banca (...) decidió la expulsión del molesto parvenu y empezó a tirar de sus específicos chicos y barones ucedeos. Había que acabar con la democrática peligrosidad social de un presidente irreductible a las sagradas razones del capital financiero": Señas de Leviatán, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1984, p.150.

<sup>22</sup> Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.165.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Martínez, "The business sector and political change in Spain", Op.cit., p.123.

<sup>24</sup> Manuel Mella Márquez, "Los grupos de interés en la consolidación democrática", Op.cit., p.340.

and financial interests.

The intervention of business sectors in the internal affairs of UCD was encouraged by the conservative factions. The CEOE's belligerence provided an ideal opportunity for factional members, whose participation in UCD had from the start been less than enthusiastic, to overcome their dependency on Suárez. Key anti-Suárez dissidents supported the "mayoría natural" strategy; in particular Miguel Herrero - elected parliamentary spokesman against the leadership's instructions - was outspoken in his advocacy of a parliamentary pact with AP to anchor UCD to the right<sup>25</sup>. In the 1977-79 period, Suárez was able to marginalise the conservative factions from the real centres of power without the risk that they would withdraw their participation; they were effectively forced into a situation of "coercive participation"<sup>26</sup>. The concentration of organisational power around the party leadership, and the autonomy of UCD from external pressures, created a high degree of dependency of party subgroups on the leader, essentially because the UCD under Suárez was the only effective option for these groups to achieve parliamentary representation and therefore political influence. This dependency declined with the crisis of Suárez's leadership and the manoeuvres of the CEOE, which had the organisational resources to create some form of political alternative to UCD. These resources consisted of the support of the banks, essential for financing any political operation, and the potential for electoral mobilisation offered by a network of associations which represented most of the business managers and small businessmen in Spain. Suárez's weakened capacity for electoral mobilisation was therefore matched by the emergence of alternative means of obtaining electoral support. In short, the emergence of the CEOE as a powerful political actor provided UCD conservatives with an exit-option, the possibility (albeit tenuous) of political life outside UCD, which would allow them to seek a higher price - in terms of political influence - for their participation in the organisation. This suggested a shift in the "optimal mix" of exit and voice options within UCD.

The CEOE therefore emerged as a powerful new presence in UCD's political space, capable of mediating in the flows of resources to the party and influencing the allegiances of

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<sup>25</sup> See Herrero's collection of essays and speeches Ideas para moderados, Op.cit.

<sup>26</sup> In the sense that they had enjoyed little influence over the definition of organisational objectives in return for their participation.

part of its social base. The CEOE's influence over business - which encompassed both small and large firms - meant that by 1979-80 it was closely involved in articulating the interests of a sector which had largely supported UCD in the first two democratic elections. The waning of Suárez's situational charisma implied that the party would have difficulty in mobilising this support again without the CEOE's assistance. But this assistance would carry the price of granting the marginalised conservative factions decisive influence over organisational and government output, which essentially meant scrapping the presidentialist model of party management and the centre-oriented strategy of electoral competition it implied. The danger of such a choice would be that the CEOE, a distorted representative of the UCD electorate, could alienate the centrist support on which UCD's plurality position was based. This danger was ignored by the UCD right, and a key characteristic of their strategy was its insistent over-estimation of the electoral influence of conservative corporate actors.

### 2.3. Church and State: UCD and religious issues

Another threat to leadership autonomy was the support the Christian Democrat and Tácito factions received from the Church hierarchy, and the limits this imposed on the Government's room for manoeuvre on religious questions. Part of the price the President had to pay for the cooperation of the Christian Democrats and Tácitos was their control over ministries relevant to religious questions; in particular Justice and Education. This represented an indirect influence of the Church on legislation affecting the status of Catholic private education and divorce, two questions whose constitutional formulation had been ambiguous and required further defining Laws. Similarly, the social and cultural importance of the Catholic Church in Spain, although diminished, was still particularly relevant for UCD, as the principal distinguishing feature of the UCD electorate was its Catholicism. This made it difficult for UCD to compete for the centre-left vote, as it was tied to positions which were increasingly out of touch with the more secular elements of Spanish society represented by the PSOE.

Within UCD there were two schools of thought on relations with the Church. On the one hand, the Christian Democrats sought to attract Church support for UCD and maintained

regular contacts, whilst not aspiring to an organic link<sup>27</sup>. On the other the Social Democrats, the President and the party apparatus aimed to maintain the maximum of autonomy as part of their centre-oriented strategy of electoral competition:

la función que en los países occidentales había cumplido la democracia cristiana, era la que correspondía a un partido como UCD...(pero) no es lo mismo organizar un partido en unas sociedades en las que el factor religioso tiene una extraordinaria importancia, que organizarlo en una España cuyo proceso de secularización ha sido extraordinariamente acelerado. Por tanto no se podía hacer un partido demócrata-cristiano, pero había que encontrar una organización de partido que cumpliera las funciones básicas que los partidos demócrata-cristianos han cumplido en los principales países europeos<sup>28</sup>.

In the initial phase of the transition the Church hierarchy had adopted a carefully neutral stance on political issues<sup>29</sup>, strengthening the UCD's autonomy in its relations with a largely Catholic social base. However, the passing of the Constitution, which coincided with changes in the Catholic hierarchy in Rome and a resulting change in the balance of power within the Spanish hierarchy, led to a more public, and conservative, expression of its positions<sup>30</sup>. This meant that UCD had to take into account Church opinion, or run the risk of Church hostility, internal conflict, and the alienation of its Catholic electorate.

These problems became apparent when the question of private Catholic education was addressed, an issue in which the Church had a material, as well as a spiritual, stake. The Estatuto de Centros Docentes (Schools Statute) was drawn up by the Minister of Education Cavero, a Christian Democrat, and his successor Otero Novas, a Tácito. The Episcopal Conference had long made its position publicly clear. The basic principle on which it insisted was that "corresponde al Estado hacer posible para todos una efectiva libertad de enseñanza que permita a los padres elegir, en igualdad de condiciones económicas, el tipo de educación que prefieren para sus hijos. Para ello es necesario el apoyo económico equitativo del Estado

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>29</sup> See for example the conferences in the Club Siglo XXI by Narciso Jubany, "Neutralidad política de la Iglesia: Fundamentos y consecuencias", in Perspectivas de una España democrática y constitucionalizada, Vol.2, Op.cit., pp.488-508; and José María Martín Patino, "La Iglesia en el proceso democrático español", Perspectivas de una España democrática y constitucionalizada, Vol.3, Op.cit., pp.89-117.

<sup>30</sup> See Juan Linz, "Religión y política", in Crisis y cambio: Electores y partidos en la España de los años 80, Op.cit., pp.201-256 (p.202).

a los centros de enseñanza estatales y no estatales"<sup>31</sup>. In contrast to this, the PSOE was fiercely opposed to State subsidies for Catholic schools. The Estatuto de Centros, as a Law of "constitutional development", was expected to be subject to consensus between the major parties, taking into account the views of the Church.

In the event consensus was not achieved: the UCD right, pressured by private schooling interest groups, defied the party leadership and forced amendments to the bill in line with the position of the Episcopal Conference. The UCD members of the parliamentary ponencia, led by Miguel Herrero<sup>32</sup> sought the support of a conservative bloc consisting of AP and the Catalan nationalists<sup>33</sup> to lead the bill through Parliament. To the apparent passivity of the Presidency, this issue was used effectively to impose the views of one sector of the party (which coincided with important external interests), provoking fierce PSOE protests<sup>34</sup>, and the discomfort of UCD Social Democrats. According to one minister interviewed by Richard Gunther, "el sector más conservador del partido coge el Estatuto de Centros, (...) y en la Comisión lo reformatan, haciéndolo más conservador. (...) Era más el resultado de un deseo de Otero Novas de situarse en una línea dura que los cambios per se que introdujo"<sup>35</sup>. This was a reproduction of the strategy of the "mayoría mecánica" that Herrero had employed in the Constitutional Commission, and its aim was evidently to force the party into more conservative positions by undermining inter-party consensus. This strategy damaged relations with the PSOE, whose cooperation would be needed for other important reforms. In this way the conservative factions hoped to push the party away from consensus, and towards a parliamentary alliance with AP, by using their strength in the UCD parliamentary group.

This use of the conservative bloc threatened party unity, as the PSOE attempted to

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<sup>31</sup> "Dificultades graves en el campo de la enseñanza", document of the Asamblea plenaria (32.), in Iribarren, Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal, Op.cit., pp.566-570 (p.568).

<sup>32</sup> Author of many reports and articles on the question. For his position (close to that of the Church hierarchy) see for example "Por una enseñanza libre de verdad", in Club Siglo XXI, Perspectivas de una España democrática y constitucionalizada, Vol.1, Op.cit., pp.429-442.

<sup>33</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.200.

<sup>34</sup> "Los socialistas acusan a UCD de un desarrollo 'sectario, desequilibrado y unilateral' de la Constitución", El País, 12 March 1980, p.16.

<sup>35</sup> Interview C34; cited in Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.479.

induce voting indiscipline in the Social Democrat faction, and presidential intervention guaranteeing "priority" to the public sector was necessary to maintain parliamentary cohesion<sup>36</sup>. In the long run, this intervention blocked the application of the Statute: Otero was removed from the Ministry shortly afterwards, and the provisions for the financing of private schools were shelved. But the original problem had arisen as a result of Suárez's reluctance to supervise ministerial and parliamentary activity and mediate between conflicting positions within the party. Here leadership failure made it easier for critics to push UCD into defending the interests of an external organisation.

Conflict also arose over the question of university reform. In the same way as the Social Democrats had been hostile to the parliamentary strategy employed for the Estatuto de Centros, the UCD right was suspicious of the Law for University Autonomy (LAU) prepared by the Social Democrats. The reason for the conflict was the favouring of the State sector in the LAU bill, which accepted the principle of education as a public service, a definition rejected by the right<sup>37</sup>. Christian Democrat sectors and members of the Opus Dei saw this as an assault on the private sector (consisting basically of Catholic universities controlled by the Opus Dei), and blocked the parliamentary proceedings of the bill in December 1980, despite the Minister enjoying the Government's full backing<sup>38</sup>. This underlined the inability of presidential authority to overcome policy divisions, and in particular its inability to obtain the support of the parliamentary group for agreed government policy. Leadership crisis combined with the intervention of powerful extra-parliamentary forces<sup>39</sup> again undermined cooperation within the UCD parliamentary elite to the benefit of conservative vested interests.

A similar situation of even greater potential for conflict was the divorce bill, in the hands of Fernández Ordóñez since September 1980. The bill, prepared by his predecessor Cavero (a Christian Democrat), had been negotiated with the Church hierarchy, and as a result was quite restrictive. The new minister changed the bill in order to permit divorce "by mutual

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<sup>36</sup> Attard, *Vida y muerte de UCD*, Op.cit., p.124.

<sup>37</sup> Otero Novas, *Nuestra democracia puede morir*, Op.cit., pp.94-95.

<sup>38</sup> "La derecha de UCD aplaza sine die el debate de la LAU", *Diario 16*, 5 December 1980, p.5.

<sup>39</sup> The opposition of the Opus Dei, which owns the University of Navarra and other centres, was instrumental in this.

agreement", whereas Cavero's draft had relied on the decision of a judge<sup>40</sup>. The contrary position of the Episcopal Conference to "mutual agreement" had been expressed several times<sup>41</sup>, and the changes made by Ordóñez sparked an angry reaction:

Si el proyecto de ley (...) llegara a promulgarse tal como está formulado, quedaría seriamente comprometido el futuro de la familia en España y gravemente dañado el bien común de nuestra sociedad<sup>42</sup>.

Moreover, the "mutual agreement" clause had been expressly rejected by the 1979 UCD Electoral Programme, which read: "No se admitirá el divorcio por mero acuerdo de los cónyuges"<sup>43</sup>. The Christian Democrats and Tácitos bitterly opposed the changes, and defended the right of the Church hierarchy to give its opinion<sup>44</sup>.

The difficulties in reaching agreement over these issues were partly the result of the party's lack of institutionalised channels of joint decision-making to integrate all sectors of the party. Suárez's failure to coordinate policy-making in this period raised the stakes in the power games played between UCD factions. The attempt to deal with divisions over education policy by dividing responsibility between two ministries was an abject failure, because the factions failed to act with restraint. This meant that policy victories for one faction were at times totally unacceptable to others, and losing factions could question the usefulness of their "coercive" participation in the organisation.

The handling of the divorce issue polarised opinion within the party. Factions, rather than seeking compromise, instead accentuated the differences between them, revealing a level of internal incoherence that threatened the continued cooperation of the original component groups in UCD. This incoherence stemmed from the increasing autonomy enjoyed by the factions, an autonomy which resulted from the weakening of the party leadership and the

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992; Fernández Ordóñez, Palabras en libertad, Op.cit., p.76; Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.159.

<sup>41</sup> See for instance "Matrimonio y familia", Document of the Asamblea Plenaria (31.), in Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal Española, Op.cit., pp.520-562.

<sup>42</sup> "Sobre regulación del matrimonio en el Código Civil", Document of the Permanent Commission of the Episcopal Conference, in Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal Española, Op.cit., pp.609-614.

<sup>43</sup> UCD, Programa electoral 1979, p.27.

<sup>44</sup> "Juan Antonio Ortega, contrario a las enmiendas de Fernández Ordóñez en la ley de Divorcio de Cavero", El País, Op.cit., p.15.

support factions received from outside organisations. This support increased factional control over the organisation's exchanges with its environment. The row over divorce allowed the Christian Democrat and Tácito factions to bring to bear their contacts with the bishops as an important organisational resource. UCD, as a party with a predominantly Catholic electorate, could not draw public criticism from the Church hierarchy without suffering electoral costs. The hierarchy's change in attitude placed considerable constraints on the UCD leadership's room for manoeuvre, particularly with regard to parliamentary strategy. A conservative approach to religious questions would lead to intensified opposition from the PSOE, whilst negotiating with the PSOE would alienate the bishops<sup>45</sup>, undermining UCD's relationship with its Catholic social base. It also emphasised the decline in the centralisation of control over organisational resources, as the leadership could only counteract this threat to the party's autonomy by using the marginalised conservative factions as intermediaries in its dealings with the Church hierarchy. The UCD Catholic right could use this resource to pressurise the Government over divorce, demanding greater voice or policy influence.

To an extent, the Christian Democrats' relationship with the Church also provided them with exit-options, which reduced their dependency on the other UCD factions, and gave them more freedom to challenge the party leadership. The bishops did not seem to share the CEOE's pretension to reorganise the Spanish party system, but in practice Church intervention reinforced the effect of the involvement of the CEOE in the party's internal affairs by pushing a distorted interpretation of the views of the UCD electorate. Like the CEOE, the Church wanted to see the more conservative factions, and in particular the Christian Democrats, playing a greater role in UCD policy-making. The CEOE membership was also very Catholic<sup>46</sup>, and likely to be concerned at UCD's approach to religious questions as well as its economic policy. This again marked an increase in sub-group autonomy, as the conservative factions could hope to control important resources for electoral mobilisation: the support of the CEOE, and the acquiescence, if not tacit encouragement, of the Church hierarchy. This contrasted with their electoral weakness relative to Suárez in 1977 and 1979. The increased autonomy of conservatives excluded from the party's dominant coalition

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<sup>45</sup> Cardinal Tarancón broke off contacts with the UCD leadership, claiming that it had not kept its word on the divorce issue (see Carlos Dávila and Luis Herrero, *De Fraga a Fraga. Crónica secreta de Alianza Popular*, Barcelona, Plaza y Janés, 1989, p.11; this version of events is confirmed by interview data).

<sup>46</sup> Robert Martínez, "The business sector and political change in Spain", *Op.cit.*, p.129.



suggested that changes would have to be made to provide them with greater influence over party decision-making (in order better to defend Church interests), and the parliamentary pressure over religious questions was aimed at achieving this.

But conflict over divorce was only partly the result of the line taken by the increasingly autonomous UCD right. The position adopted by Fernández Ordóñez was a provocation to the more Catholic sectors of UCD, and may have amounted to retaliation for the hard-line attitude of the right over Catholic private education. But it was also an expression of the increasing autonomy of the Social Democrat faction, due to Ordóñez's well-known contacts with the PSOE leadership<sup>47</sup>. The fact that Ordóñez had the exit-option of passing over to the PSOE, leaving UCD with an even narrower majority, afforded him significant "blackmail potential" in his dealings with the party leadership. Indeed it is a widely held view that Fernández Ordóñez used issues such as divorce and the universities to demonstrate his "progressive" credentials and pave the way for his transfer to the PSOE. One Christian Democrat gave the following interpretation:

Nosotros debíamos sacar una ley de divorcio, ahora eso nunca se ha puesto en discusión. Ahora se puede sacar una ley del divorcio habiendo hablado con los sectores implicados, o se puede sacar una ley del divorcio tocando el tambor para irritar a las personas que están en contra del divorcio (...). En mi opinión Fernández Ordóñez adquirió, con ese desgaste de UCD un activo que ha sido suficiente para poder ingresar al PSOE<sup>48</sup>.

Their relationship with the PSOE gave the Social Democrats the incentive to push for increasingly radical policies in order to mark their differences with conservatives in UCD.

These developments were a serious threat to the interdependency of party elite groups: policy differences were combined with an increase in subgroup autonomy as a result of the pressures of external organisations. Moreover the external pressures on UCD from right and left corresponded to the bilateral opposition the party faced in its electoral and parliamentary activity, creating a dangerous centrifugal dynamic. Since Suárez preferred to ally with the Social Democrats, the weight of presidential power favoured the left of the party. As far as the more conservative factions in UCD were concerned, this meant that the output of the

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<sup>47</sup> According to one source, PSOE leaders had been trying to persuade Fernández Ordóñez to leave UCD and join them since 1978 (interview with Arias Salgado, June 1992).

<sup>48</sup> Interview C36.

UCD Governments was becoming less and less acceptable to them (they were receiving insufficient collective incentives) at the same time as their control over zones of organisational uncertainty and their autonomy from the rest of the organisation was increasing. This suggested that the balance of power on which UCD's dominant coalition had rested since 1977 had shifted, favouring the minority elites. The bargaining process within the party, conditioned by the party's majoritarian allocation of decision-making power, failed to recognise these changes. In Hirschman's terms, these groups had little opportunity of voice, to push the organisation in the desired direction. This led the conservative wing of UCD to launch an offensive against the leadership in an attempt to win increased organisational influence through an alternative dominant coalition which would integrate conservative representatives of the UCD social base and tilt the balance of power within the party in the right's favour.

### **3. In search of voice: The critics and the Congress of Palma de Mallorca**

#### **3.1. The critical movement**

The conflictual nature of the 2nd UCD Congress was the result of the mobilisation of predominantly conservative UCD parliamentarians and activists into the critical movement. The critical movement began as a protest against the supposedly undemocratic nature of the party structures in the run-up to the 2nd national party Congress, and ended by forcing Suárez's resignation and challenging the organisational dynamic established by Arias Salgado and his successor Calvo Ortega. The UCD internal debate was expressed at the Palma Congress and in the run-up to it with a level of rhetorical violence and bitterness which made cooperation between rival factions very difficult to rebuild afterwards<sup>49</sup>. This conflict was all the more damaging for the fact that it split the party into two antagonistic groups which themselves represented combinations of factions: "dos bloques que competían con vehemencia por el poder"<sup>50</sup>. The outcome of the Congress, held at Palma de Mallorca in February 1981, was to seriously undermine UCD's chances of recovering as a credible political force. An explanation is therefore required not only for the emergence of conflict, natural in any

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<sup>49</sup> Miguel Herrero has described the Congress as "violento y jaranero" (*Memorias de estío*, Op.cit., p.237).

<sup>50</sup> Huneus, *La Unión de Centro Democrático*, Op.cit., p.328.

heterogeneous political party, but also for the particularly damaging nature of the conflict.

The mobilisation of UCD critics was aimed at the transformation of the party into a openly conservative political force, to ensure that their participation was rewarded by policy benefits and influence over party goals. Not only were the UCD Government and its President in deep crisis, but some of the policies the Government had followed were unacceptable to the more conservative sectors of the party. Conservative sectors argued strongly that these policies were also unacceptable to much of the UCD electorate, and a "betrayal" of the 1979 electoral programme. As Rupérez explains,

Hay una desafección por parte de las clases medias, y consiguientemente el grupo crítico lo que pretende es replantear la misión del partido en términos más de centro-derecha que de centro-izquierda<sup>51</sup>.

The critical movement was above all a response of the marginalised factions on the UCD right to a perceived dearth of purposive incentives distributed from the dominant coalition.

This is shown by the way in which the critical movement divided the party very much on factional lines. Table 6.1. divides the UCD deputies into three groups, according to their allegiances in the organisational debate: the critics, the officials, and the time-servers. The critics are parliamentarians present in the critical list at the Palma Congress or who signed the "Manifesto of the 200" protesting against the existing power structure within the party. The officials are parliamentarians present in the official list supporting Suárez's candidate for the UCD Presidency. The time-servers are parliamentarians whose names do not figure in either list, but who can be assumed to have supported the official party line with few exceptions. The Tácitos and Christian Democrats, the Liberals, and sectors of the Partido Popular accounted for 70 out of 120 parliamentarians associated with the critical movement. By contrast, only 6 parliamentarians from the Tácito, Christian Democrat or Liberal factions can be found on the official lists for the Palma Congress, and a further 16 fall into the category of time-servers (assumed to have been largely loyal to the party leadership). The case of the Partido Popular is less clear: 10 members of that group found their way onto the official lists (including barons such as Pío Cabanillas and Pérez Llorca), and 6 were time-servers. However 70 out of 108 members of these four factions supported the critical movement.

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<sup>51</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

The other side of the internal conflict is revealed by examining the characteristics of UCD officialists and time-servers. The official lists at the Palma Congress contained 58 UCD parliamentarians, of whom 24 were Independents and 16 Social Democrats, the factions most associated with key government ministries and control over the party apparatus. Another 12 names are divided equally between the PP and regionalists. It is worth noting that only 9 senators were present in Suárez's official lists. The category of time-servers, which mostly supported the official position, was made up largely of Independents, Social Democrats, regionalists and Partido Popular (94 out of 110) with a negligible presence of the factions most associated with the critical movement. Therefore the composition of the critical, official and time-server categories can be explained in terms of factional ascription, confirming that what was at issue in the organisational debate was the divergence of political objectives and interests between conservatives and "progressives"<sup>52</sup>.

The unease with which a number of UCD policies - such as the Fiscal Reform and monetary policy, the projected Divorce Law and Law of University Autonomy - were met amongst UCD conservatives has already been discussed. This was aggravated by Suárez's occasional concessions to a populist, "progressive" political rhetoric. For the more conservative sectors of UCD, there was a growing feeling that the existing structure and leadership of the party offered little prospect of producing the kinds of public goods that they were interested in. Not only were they not satisfied with party output; they were deprived of the means to influence it by the party's presidentialist structures. This message was evident in the documents published by the critics in the run-up to the Palma Congress. These documents proposed changes to the party's organisation in response to the political failures of the UCD Government; the critical movement

responde a una demanda, bastante generalizada entre los militantes, de cambiar la forma de actuar, y la de ejercer responsabilidad en el partido, y parte de una insatisfacción muy extendida ante las prestaciones políticas de UCD<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup> Factional ascription is more successful than access to selective benefits (party and Government posts) in explaining dissidence amongst UCD parliamentarians at the Palma Congress; see Jonathan Hopkin, "Factionalism in the Spanish transition to democracy: The case of Unión de Centro Democrático", ECPR workshop on "Factionalism and regime democratisation", Madrid, April 17-22 1994.

<sup>53</sup> Article signed by the collective Blasco de Alagón, "Democracia, ¿para qué?", Diario 16, 3 January 1981, p.3.

This "dissatisfaction" was largely directed at the implementation of policies regarded as closer to the positions of the PSOE than to those of the conservative UCD electorate. The political arguments of the critics sought to discredit the idea of a "progressive" project. Landelino Lavilla announced that

Siempre me he negado a participar en la puja por un extraño progresismo, que es espúreo para UCD en la medida en que toma como referencia concepciones y valores ajenos. (...) Hace falta alumbrar un mensaje a la sociedad española (...) para despertar la fe en los valores propios de nuestra nación<sup>54</sup>.

Opposition to the "progressive" strategy was articulated by a group of critics who wrote newspaper articles under the name "Blasco de Alagón". In a strategic proposal for UCD, they argued that a UCD Government should err on the side of conservatism, rather than "progress":

La acción de Gobierno hasta 1983 establecerá una clara distinción entre lo que es vital para la supervivencia material, moral y política de la nación y lo que, aun siendo importante, no debe poner en riesgo el delicado entramado de una sociedad cambiante y en crisis<sup>55</sup>.

The critics insisted that the priority of UCD Governments should be to represent the interests of the party's conservative electorate, rather than those of potential PSOE voters. In particular, the emphasis on preserving existing social relationships suggested that the critical movement was also motivated by the unease of conservative vested interests threatened by the pace of political and social reforms. In order to ensure that UCD began to protect such interests, the question of the Government's relationship with the party had to be addressed.

The critics argued that the presidentialist model of party organisation left the party incapable of influencing the way in which its President governed. The "Blasco de Alagón" strategic proposal emphasised the need for party to predominate over Government: "El partido ha de estar en condiciones de dirigir y controlar la acción de Gobierno a todos los niveles y no al revés"<sup>56</sup>. Eduardo Merigó, a liberal critic, complained that:

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<sup>54</sup> Interview with Landelino Lavilla, "Landelino quema sus naves", *Diario 16*, 12 January 1981, p.3.

<sup>55</sup> Article signed Blasco de Alagón, "Una estrategia para UCD", *Diario 16*, 29 January 1981, p.3. See also José María Martín Oviedo, "Progresistas a la violeta", *Diario 16*, 21 January 1981, p.2.

<sup>56</sup> Blasco de Alagón, "Una estrategia para UCD", cit.

Después de las elecciones victoriosas de 1979 se demostró de forma inequívoca que el Gobierno se constituía en base a lealtades personales a su presidente, a menudo con personas que no formaban parte de UCD. En lugar de que el Gobierno emanara del partido iba ocurriendo lo contrario, que el partido se convertía en una sucursal del Gobierno<sup>57</sup>.

The Blasco de Alagón collective complained that "el comité ejecutivo ha sido el órgano pasivo de resonancia de las sucesivas decisiones de los Gobiernos de UCD"<sup>58</sup>. However it is not uncommon even in established democracies for governments to dominate the parties that support them. The critics' real grievance was the conservative factions' limited influence within the Council of Ministers, the real decision-making body in UCD, and their consequent inability to influence the definition of the Government's objectives and policies.

The factional composition of UCD Governments from 1977-80 demonstrates that presidentialist party management minimised the conservative minority's influence over the policy output of these Governments. Table 6.2. examines the distribution of Ministries between the UCD factions over the period of Suárez's Presidency in relation to their strength in the Centrist parliamentary group in the Congress. What emerges is a distribution of governmental power between factions which bore little relation to their parliamentary weight. UCD Governments under the Presidency of Adolfo Suárez under-represented the Liberals and Christian Democrats from the very beginning, to the benefit of Independents, Regionalists, Tácitos and, most significantly, Social Democrats. This confirms that power was not distributed between the factions along purely consociational lines, and that instead Suárez favoured those factions who shared his view of the Government's priorities. The prominent position accorded to the Social Democrats, especially in economic policy, was a major source of conservative discontent. In course of the First legislature, the factions prominent in the critical movement lost ground in terms of government power. The Christian Democrats, Liberals and the conservative sector of the Partido Popular amounted to 35.2% of the UCD parliamentary group, but only controlled 26.2% of ministerial portfolios in the third and fourth UCD Governments, and 18.2% in the fifth.

The marginalisation of "critical" factions from government power is shown by Table 6.3., which analyses the distribution of power positions between officials, critics and time-

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<sup>57</sup> Eduardo Merigó, "Familias o corrientes ideológicas", *Diario 16*, 27 December 1980, p.3.

<sup>58</sup> Blasco de Alagón collective, "Sin vencedores ni vencidos", *Diario 16*, 27 December 1980, p.2. This is confirmed by interview data (interviews with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992; Iñigo Cavero, July 1992).

servers in the UCD group in the Congress<sup>59</sup>. This data shows that the officials are clearly the most privileged group in terms of ministerial portfolios, and are over-represented on the UCD Executive Committee. In turn, the critics, marginalised from government power, enjoyed a clear advantage in the distribution of parliamentary posts: the 17 positions given to critics included the Presidency of the Congress in both Legislatures, the Presidency of the Constitutional Commission and two of the three UCD representatives on the ponencia (drafting committee) of the Constitution. This emphasises that the critical movement was also very much a protest against the Government from neglected parliamentarians, confirming that majority domination without consent was incapable of securing the UCD Government's parliamentary base.

The changes in the Government resulting from the 1980 leadership crisis did not favour conservative sectors. The September 1980 settlement brought key barons such as Martín Villa, Pío Cabanillas and Fernández Ordóñez back into the Government, at the expense of the Liberal, Christian Democrat and Tácito factions. The Liberals and Christian Democrats had always been marginalised from the key decision-making structures, but the Tácitos (such as Lavilla, Oreja, Alvarez, Otero Novas) had been key contributors to the Suárez dominant coalition. The loss of key ministries in the September reshuffle - Foreign Affairs, and the crucial Justice portfolio, which dealt with the imminent divorce bill - and the confirmation of the strength of the Social Democrat faction, led the Tácitos to reject the party's political direction and join the Christian Democrats and Liberals in opposing the presidential model of party management.

The most conservative groups - Liberals and Christian Democrats - demanded a say in government policy output proportionate to their strength in the parliamentary groups and the Party Congress. The objective of this was to change the fundamental balance between continuity and reform in UCD government policy. The inability of the conservatives to prevent the Government from following policies - such as the divorce bill or the growth of deficit spending - which they found unacceptable, undermined their adherence to the organisation. In the absence of an adequate supply of collective incentives, the critical movement proposed a series of organisational changes in order to ensure that the minority

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<sup>59</sup> Table 6.3. has been compiled by simply adding up the number of posts held by UCD Deputies. Five deputies are excluded from these tables: Suárez himself, Clavero and Garrigues, and two others who signed the "Manifiesto of the 200" and then stood in the "official" lists at the Palma Congress.

factions acquired greater influence over the definition of party policy ("voice" in Hirschman's terms), allowing them to block reform and protect conservative interests.

However, some within the critical movement had even more radical aims than this. One of its principal leaders, Oscar Alzaga, had publicly stated in 1977 that his participation in UCD was devoid of enthusiasm, and that he hoped the Spanish electorate would, in subsequent elections, have a better option to vote for<sup>60</sup>. It is not unreasonable to infer that critics such as Alzaga, having failed to make Christian Democracy the hegemonic force in 1977-79, saw UCD's crisis as an opportunity to redefine the political map to the right of the PSOE. The critical movement's undeclared aims therefore made open conflict difficult to avoid.

### 3.2. An alternative view of party institutionalisation: The organisational proposal of the critics

The majority logic enshrined in the UCD statutes introduced elements of considerable rigidity into the management of the party. Thus in early 1981 the party structures still reflected the internal balance of power on which the centralised unitary party had been established in 1978. The majority bonus in the internal electoral system made the party decision-making bodies insensitive to shifts in factional strength, making it very difficult to displace the existing dominant coalition. The critics, aware that they were not strong enough to win majority support in the party, argued that internal democracy required proportionally elected decision-making bodies. Demands for greater proportionality in internal elections, which dated back to the First Congress, were put to the Executive Committee in December 1980 by the Tácito Lavilla, with the support of Christian Democrats and Liberals, only to be defeated by the majority vote of the Committee (itself elected by the majority system in 1978)<sup>61</sup>. This underlined the difficulty of pushing through reforms in the election of internal decision-making bodies, when the reforms have to be approved by the bodies elected under an existing system. The critical movement was a reaction to the inertia resulting from this situation, and its explicit aims were fundamental changes to the party Statutes to give them greater voice. The "Manifiesto de los 200" contained four demands for the reform of the

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<sup>60</sup> Alzaga, "Votar centro tiene sentido", Op.cit. An extensive quote is reproduced in Chapter 3.

<sup>61</sup> Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.186.



party's internal structures:

1. Que la voluntad colectiva del partido sea definida y articulada por órganos colegiados y ampliamente representativos y no por voluntades personales. 2. Que la constitución de dichos órganos se haga por un sistema de representación proporcional, de modo que todos participen en las decisiones políticas, incluidas las minorías que en cada momento y lugar pueden existir (...). 3. Que (...) en toda la burocracia interna del partido, impere el principio del respeto al funcionamiento de los órganos colegiados de representación y de gobierno, (...) que la democracia interna genere la selección de los dirigentes y los cuadros del partido. 4. (...) El sector crítico (...) reclama una mayor transparencia en la información y comunicación con los comités y órganos del partido. (...) Un partido democrático centrista ha de construirse con la efectiva colaboración de todos sus afiliados y nunca de espaldas a ellos<sup>62</sup>.

This document represented a fundamental rejection of the presidential model of party organisation as practised in UCD. The all-powerful role of the party leader ("voluntades personales"), the failure of the party structures to adequately represent minorities, and the inconsistent functioning of the internal bureaucracy and channels of communication were challenged by 200 (later 500) conference delegates, many of them parliamentarians.

The Christian Democrat and Liberal sectors who dominated the critical movement opposed the presidentialist party model on the grounds that it emphasised the personal charisma of the party leader at the expense of the party's ideological identity and social base. For Miguel Herrero, UCD suffered

dos vicios estructurales: la condición carismática del partido, y el error sobre la propia posición...Sus principales consecuencias son las siguientes: Por un lado y junto con una máxima personalización del poder, una erosión acelerada del liderazgo que al asumir todas las decisiones resulta incapaz de tomarlas todas, pero se desgasta en todo caso. (...) Por otro lado, un sistema así produce inseguridad, porque el carisma siempre es excepcional y en lo excepcional nadie está tranquilo. (...) El liderazgo de UCD nunca supo de verdad lo que representaba y de ahí la ambigüedad de sus tesis, la inseguridad de sus posiciones, y la falta de confianza que suscitaba por doquier<sup>63</sup>.

Herrero opposed the personalisation of the party's decision-making process as inefficient and inconsistent; the erratic changes in UCD's political position in some areas were attributed to the party leadership's unwillingness to commit itself to the representation of stable social interests. This prominent critic therefore argued that the concentration of power around the

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<sup>62</sup> "El manifiesto de los 200", Diario 16, 22 December 1980.

<sup>63</sup> Miguel Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., pp.205-208.

party leader inherent in presidentialisation was incompatible with the institutionalisation of the party:

La institucionalización con su capacidad de perdurar e integrar, proporciona seguridad (...) el carisma, cualquiera que pueda ser el acierto de la gestión personal, es algo que siempre ha de estar en tela de juicio, produce inseguridad. (...) La polémica no puede plantearse entre una pluralidad de presidenciables, sino entre la situación actual y esa objetividad transpersonal que da la colectividad racionalmente organizada<sup>64</sup>.

According to this view, UCD's fate was too bound up with that of the party leader, with the risk that when the leader fell, the party would fall with it. The dependence of the party on the leader left decision-making in the hands of an individual whose power was "exceptional" rather than durable, creating uncertainty ("inseguridad") about the objectives and interests defended by the party.

But concentration of organisational power around an individual does not of necessity create uncertainty<sup>65</sup>; the cause of uncertainty in this case was the nature of the individual himself, and the circumstances in which he operated. Suárez had no firm ideological identity, and was the man responsible for coordinating negotiations between opposed political forces in a situation of fragile equilibrium, hence the inconsistencies in the positions he represented. It was certainly true that the presidential model left the party vulnerable at the demise of its leader, as the concentration of electoral resources around Suárez meant UCD was largely dependent on him for achieving high levels of parliamentary representation. What was "exceptional" about Suárez's leadership is the extent of the political resources he controlled in the initial phase of the transition, which enabled UCD to win elections largely on the basis of the popularity of its leader. On this basis, the party followed the logic of electoral competition in 1977-79, and very successfully, consolidating Suárez's leadership. But, as Richard Gunther has pointed out,

El liderazgo de un partido puramente electoral, sin embargo, puede ser muy precario. Si la reivindicación del liderazgo por su principal figura se basa solamente en su atractivo electoral, el apoyo al líder partidista depende entonces de

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<sup>64</sup> Herrero, "¿Adónde va UCD?", Op.cit., p.50.

<sup>65</sup> The cases of the Gaullist movement, or indeed the PSOE in government since 1982, indicate that personalisation of power can act as a guarantee of stability.

un éxito electoral continuado. Y si se pierden una o dos elecciones la autoridad del líder puede ser cuestionada<sup>66</sup>.

The excessive concentration of political responsibility around the party leader, as well as hindering the party's institutional development, also ran the risk of undermining the leader himself, as the "Blasco de Alagón" collective argued:

El enfoque personalista en los estatutos plantea un doble riesgo: 1. Dificultar la institucionalización de UCD; pretender que ésta sea simplemente un conjunto que gira alrededor de un líder y sus circunstancias, es condicionar la supervivencia de la UCD (...); 2. Es un riesgo para el propio líder, que se verá imputar los resultados buenos y malos de todas las decisiones tomadas<sup>67</sup>.

The critics argued that institutionalisation required UCD to acquire resources for electoral mobilisation from a more stable source. Their organisational proposal was that UCD could effectively become institutionalised as the representative of the most powerful conservative interests in Spain.

It has already been explained how Arias Salgado directed the creation of a centralised party apparatus which had begun the process of consolidation, in the sense of structural formalisation and bureaucratic centralisation. The critics argued that party institutionalisation required more than the establishment of a formalised, bureaucratic structure under central control; indeed some felt that this was totally unnecessary. They rejected the centralisation of control over electoral resources, characteristic of presidentialism, in favour of close contacts with appropriate interest groups, following the logic of constituency representation. Herrero condemned the "electoral machine" developed by Arias Salgado as "un mero aparato con fichas (...), una éspora burocrática, impermeable a las fuerzas y a las necesidades sociales"<sup>68</sup>. Instead he proposed a constant cooperation and interpenetration between UCD and a series of groups and associations representing religious, economic and social interests, which would mobilise support at election time, firmly anchoring UCD to a stable social base.

This model - the party as holding company<sup>69</sup> - implied the institutionalisation of the

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<sup>66</sup> Richard Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.469.

<sup>67</sup> "Sin vencedores ni vencidos", Diario 16, 27 December 1980, p.2.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p.45.

<sup>69</sup> The term used by Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.463.

party as a "transmission belt" for social interests, in line with the logic of constituency representation:

Un partido como el nuestro no puede vivir ajeno a las asociaciones interclasistas, familiares, profesionales y económicas que constituyen un poderoso entramado social y que defienden unos legítimos intereses y profesan, no ya unas ideas, sino unas creencias coincidentes con el estilo de vida que nuestro partido quiere impulsar<sup>70</sup>.

In this way the "inseguridad" over the party's objectives and interests would be overcome - its goal would be the defence of the interests of a stable electoral base:

El elemento clave de la seguridad que nuestro electorado requiere es una seguridad política, consistente en saber a dónde vamos, es decir, en tener en el corazón una meta (...) el marcar esa meta en sintonía con las aspiraciones de la propia base electoral, en irradiar su atractivo a la sociedad entera, en sostener hacia ella el timón; en ello consiste el liderazgo político<sup>71</sup>.

Underlying this strategy was an attempt to resolve the other fundamental problem identified by Herrero, "el error sobre la propia posición". By this he meant that the logic of electoral competition followed by its pseudo-charismatic leadership had led UCD to target voters on the centre-left, abandoning the party's "true" social base on the right. The holding company model, despite Herrero's deceptive use of the adjective "moderado", would in fact put an end to UCD's troublesome independence from conservative forces, transforming it into an unambiguously right-wing party, capable of (or limited to) representing the interests of what the critics saw as a fundamentally conservative electorate. Herrero condemned the logic of electoral competition as an abdication of the party's representative function:

De la misma manera que un partido socialista no puede hacer su política de espaldas a los sindicatos de su misma filiación, nosotros no podemos hacer nuestra política educativa al margen de los padres de familia y de las asociaciones profesionales de maestros, ni nuestra política económica de espaldas a los empresarios<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> "¿Adónde va UCD?", reproduced in Herrero, Ideas para moderados, Op.cit., p.46.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p.51.

<sup>72</sup> Herrero, "¿Qué es la moderación?", Document on strategy presented to the UCD General Secretariat, September 1981, reproduced in Ideas para moderados, Op.cit., pp.71-106 (p.101).

The irony of such a claim is of course that the PSOE Governments after 1982 quickly distanced themselves from the party's trade union base, whilst maintaining their dominant position at least into the early 1990s. The "social base" referred to by Herrero included the most conservative interest groups in Spanish society: Catholic educational or cultural associations and the Church hierarchy, and the employers' associations and banking interests. This strategy fell in line with moves towards the creation of a "mayoría natural", which would be dominated by UCD, but which would condition UCD's political strategy to the demands of conservative interests.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, some theorists have suggested that in the initial phase of party development, a strategy of constituency representation is most appropriate for organisational consolidation. Electoral competition is less risky when a party's core constituency of "captive" voters is stable enough for its support to be taken for granted. The critics were correct in pointing out that UCD was in no such position, and that closer links with its social base were required. However, their counter-proposal went further, by insisting that UCD's social base was basically very conservative, and that in consequence consolidation required close association with a number of groups who cannot be regarded as truly representative of the UCD electorate.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, the conservative movement of internal opposition was closely connected to these groups. External interests encouraged the conservative factions to launch an offensive on the presidential model of party management, in order to produce a shift in the party's position which would benefit both. The pressures on the UCD Government have already been discussed. But these pressures also aimed at undermining the internal balance of power inside UCD. There is evidence that in 1980 certain influential sectors of the business and banking communities tired of Suárez and chose to organise a campaign to undermine the existing UCD leadership<sup>73</sup>. Arias Salgado interprets this campaign as a response to UCD's refusal to defend purely conservative interests:

UCD no renunció a llevar a cabo su programa de reformas, y cada reforma de alguna forma lesiona intereses establecidos, y eso es lo que lleva a parte de los intereses conservadores de este país de decir pues ya está bien del reformismo de UCD. Naturalmente que ese planteamiento era compartido por un sector dentro del partido, y entonces

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<sup>73</sup> See for instance Josep Meliá, *Así cayó Adolfo Suárez*, Op.cit., also Antonio Navalón and Francisco Guerrero, *Objetivo Adolfo Suárez*, Madrid, Espasa Calpe, 1987.

se produce una conexión entre una parte de UCD y la presión externa, para reconducir UCD en un partido más claramente conservador<sup>74</sup>.

The support of conservative interest groups was a key element in the creation of the critical movement. Journalistic sources attributed the real leadership of the movement to Antonio Garrigues, brother of the late Joaquín and president of the Asociación para el Progreso de la Dirección<sup>75</sup>, an important mouthpiece for right-wing business interests. The offices established by the critics opposite the Congress of Deputies and during the Palma Congress were paid for by contributions from employers' associations<sup>76</sup>.

Whilst it is difficult to demonstrate conspiratorial interpretations of the critical campaign, the intervention of external organisations in support of the critics is fundamental in explaining the tensions arising at the Palma Congress. It has been suggested that one of the only possible escape routes for Suárez in this period - the dissolution of Parliament and elections fought without the critics - was closed to him because of the refusal of financial sectors to provide him with resources for an election campaign<sup>77</sup>. Moreover the conflict over the divorce bill was heightened by the publication of a document by the Episcopal Conference on the 3 February 1981 which strongly criticised Fernández Ordóñez's plans. As the party Congress began only 4 days later, it is hard not to interpret this as an attempt to influence the outcome of the internal conflict<sup>78</sup>. The assistance that external forces provided to the critical movement was not simply a short-term favour; it was part of a longer-term strategy of party development, which had the aim of radically transforming both the organisation and the ideological position of UCD, in order to transform it into a vehicle for conservative interests.

The presidentialists, or officials, regarded the critical position as suicidal given the moderate, centre-oriented preferences of the Spanish electorate, a view supported by several

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<sup>74</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>75</sup> See "Los duros del suarismo impidieron el acuerdo con los críticos", Diario 16, 9 February 1981, p.6.

<sup>76</sup> Miguel Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.228.

<sup>77</sup> Diario 16, 3 December 1980, p.5.

<sup>78</sup> Comisión Permanente (83.a), "Sobre regulación del matrimonio en el Código Civil", in Jesús Iribarren, Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal Española 1965-83, Op.cit., pp.609-614.

academic studies<sup>79</sup>. The party apparatus shunned approaches from interest groups and associations which could have constituted a link - or "transmission belt" - between the party leadership (in particular the Government) and a conservative electoral base, for evident reasons of government and party strategy. For instance proposals to create conservative peasant syndicates under UCD influence, to establish links with teachers' associations, associations of small and medium sized firms and associations of parents of school-children, were postponed or rejected out of hand by the party apparatus<sup>80</sup>. There are two main explanations for this. First, organic links with these groups would inevitably push the party towards the representation of (often very conservative) sectoral interests, undermining the Government's freedom of action, and its strategy of electoral competition with the PSOE under a charismatic leadership. The holding company proposal would have made the kind of manoeuvring with which the UCD Governments had consolidated the new democratic system impossible by tying Government action to the wishes of interest groups threatened by political change. Electoral and survey data indicates that such an arrangement would have alienated the moderate centre voters in which the UCD's electoral strength was based, with the risk of handing power over to the Socialists at a delicate stage in the consolidation process. Finally it would have introduced elements of extraordinary rigidity into the party's strategic choices, as all policy positions would have been subject to the veto of associated pressure groups. As one source within the party apparatus argued:

Nadie se niega a entrar en contacto con las fuerzas reales de la sociedad. E incluso a ser el vínculo de la representación. Claro, lo que no se puede hacer es convertir tampoco a UCD en el partido que representaba los intereses más conservadores de la Iglesia católica. O sectores más reaccionarios del empresariado español. Porque naturalmente con esa representación no se ganan las elecciones (...). Un partido socialista moderado representa mucho mejor la estructura social española que esos círculos de influencia de la sociedad española, que globalmente son muy reaccionarios<sup>81</sup>.

Apart from these factors, the party apparatus evidently feared the emergence of a powerful organisational structure under the control of the more conservative factions, which was

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<sup>79</sup> See Chapter 3, Section 2. See also Richard Gunther, "El realineamiento del sistema de partidos de 1982", Op.cit.

<sup>80</sup> Cambio 16, N.309, 13-19 November 1977, p.20; Interview B2.

<sup>81</sup> Interview C46. Cited in Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.465-466.

incompatible with the project of hegemonisation through presidential authority. Instead attempts were made to provide UCD with a trade union base, through the development of the Unión Sindical Obrera (USO), an already existing union which had fallen behind the dominant UGT and CC.OO in terms of membership, and which the UCD Secretariat hoped to resuscitate. This could have counter-balanced the influence of more conservative organisations in UCD's political space, providing a stronger foundation for a presidentialist party, and facilitating a centrist electoral strategy. But the failure of this project to materialise suggests that there was insufficient interest on the part of Suárez and Arias Salgado to provide UCD with any form of interest group support<sup>82</sup>. In their defence it can be suggested that the extraordinary pressures of the period can in part explain why insufficient energy was dedicated to this matter.

In contrast to the critical position, the Secretary General's aim was that the presidentialist model would allow UCD to represent conservative interest groups, but from a position of strength, allowing the party to filter their demands:

Los sectores conservadores del país deberían encontrar un tipo de reflejo también en el seno de la organización, pero el país tenía que saber que ese sector más conservador del partido, como ocurre con los sectores más izquierdistas de los partidos de izquierda, no son los que mandan en el partido, y eventualmente, no son nunca los que gobiernan<sup>83</sup>.

The centrist orientation of the majority of Spanish voters meant that UCD could not follow the critics' proposed strategy without risking high electoral costs. The experiences of 1977 and 1979 suggested that UCD could not govern without some appeal to the moderate, non-ideological centre (the "marais"), and a strategy based on the logic of constituency representation would risk opening up this centre space to the PSOE. Suárez and Arias Salgado's position was to trade off the stability of the "captive" conservative elements of the UCD constituency in order to win over marginal votes necessary for winning government power. This was difficult to reconcile with the demands of the conservatives, and to an extent, the UCD leadership's gamble was that the lack of a feasible right-wing alternative would

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<sup>82</sup> For an analysis of UCD's relations with the trade unions, see Huneus, Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.220-230.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.



close off the possibility of exit on the right, allowing the party to cover the centre ground. A strong party organisation under the centralised control of a charismatic leader enabled UCD to resist conservative pressures in the initial phase of development.

This strategy was chosen not only for reasons of electoral competition. The delicate balance of the transition process required the UCD Government to follow a "política de Estado", rather than slavishly defending conservative interests. As one UCD leader interviewed by Richard Gunther argued,

UCD no era un partido que pudiese asumir la tarea de representar, en términos políticos, a una parte del electorado, sino que se vio obligado a hacer una política planteada por encima de los intereses de partido. Y eso, naturalmente, implica abandonar el vínculo de la representación (...)<sup>84</sup>.

This shows how the policy-making demands of the 1977-82 period worked against the conservatives' strategy for party consolidation. UCD Governments, because of the nature of the transition, had to reconcile the demands of the party's social base whilst integrating the various political forces and parties into the new democratic system. UCD had to distribute benefits even to groups who would clearly not vote for the party, at the expense of the UCD electorate. The constraints of the transition period therefore made consolidation as a conservative party incompatible with the pivotal role UCD Governments were required to play. Suárez was quite prepared to put the success of the transition before the long-term survival of the party.

The political environment of the transition period also provided opportunities. In the initial phase of party development, Arias Salgado was able to reject approaches from conservative interest groups on the grounds that the weak associational structure left by the dictatorship lacked genuinely representative groups with which to cooperate: "todo era muy reciente, todo estaba formándose, había pocas cosas representativas, los sindicatos estaban cuajando, las organizaciones empresariales estaban cuajando. Ninguno podía constituir un punto de referencia estable"<sup>85</sup>. However the pressures for associational links became stronger as these groups grew in organisational strength. As one Liberal argued in 1979,

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<sup>84</sup> Interview C46, cited in Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", *Op.cit.*, p.450.

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

los éxitos iniciales de UCD se han producido en situaciones de franca despolitización. La gradual e inevitable politización del cuerpo social habrá de producir la demanda de unos contenidos ideológicos, y que UCD desempeñe su papel de correa de transmisión<sup>86</sup>.

In effect, the emergence of powerful conservative interest groups provided the UCD right with the opportunity to push the party towards organisational links which would change its nature and objectives. Liberals and Christian Democrats stood to gain from such links, because of their political and personal proximity to the most powerful conservative interest groups: the employers' associations, the big banks, the Church hierarchy, and the influential parent-teacher associations. This would not have happened had the post-1979 leadership crisis been avoided; instead the failures of the UCD Governments in 1979-80 meant that the organisational "head-start" the party had enjoyed in relation to conservative interest groups was lost.

So the organisational debate which emerged at the 2nd UCD Congress was much more than a short-term disagreement over party structures or a simple struggle for power positions. The two coalitions of subgroups had different visions of how the party should be organised, because this question would determine the selection of the social base - where the party obtained the resources needed to function - and what policies would have to be pursued in exchange for these resources. This split, over the essential question of the organisation's role in Spanish society and politics, is at the root of UCD's failure to consolidate. Presidentialists and critics had a different idea of what institutionalisation was, and behind the critics' organisational proposals lay a project for the destruction of UCD as a genuine centre force, an objective unacceptable to the party leadership. The party was divided over its social and political identity and its basic function in the Spanish political system, and the existence of exit options for party subgroups on both right and left made this division particularly threatening for the survival of the organisation.

### 3.3. Presidentialism without a president: The effect of the party Statutes

Despite the destructive intentions of some faction leaders, there is little evidence to suggest that large numbers of UCD members at any level genuinely sought the party's

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<sup>86</sup> Antonio Papell, Ideas para un partido de centro, Op.cit., p.95.

disintegration<sup>87</sup>. The party's inability to generate a compromise solution at Palma and afterwards therefore requires explanation. It has already been mentioned that the failure to reach a settlement at the 2nd Congress was in part a function of the rigidities inherent in UCD's organisational rules. Quite apart from the fundamental divisions between the critics and the officials on the party's future, the presidentialist structure itself, by definition, encouraged an almost artificial polarisation of the internal debate, which explains in part why the conflict could not be absorbed by the party's structures. The majoritarian logic of internal elections made sense in a situation of unity and cohesion, where the party leader enjoyed the consent of all but a muted minority of organisational actors. However, from the moment the opposition to the leadership became a significant minority, this logic encouraged the creation of a "dissident" bloc, counterposed to a "loyalist" bloc supporting the leadership. The bipolar nature of elections of conference delegates and party governing bodies encouraged total acceptance or total rejection of an established leadership position, since a genuinely competitive election for the party presidency would inevitably be seen as a declaration of war. Critics of Suárez's leadership style had few choices in a party conference: take part in an acclamatory vote to confirm the existing leadership, abstain, or organise a leadership challenge (which they could not win), with all the consequences for party stability that implied.

To an extent, therefore, the more responsible members of the critical movement sought to avoid such a frontal clash with the dominant coalition by pushing for internal elections by proportional representation, which would permit the conservative factions to acquire some influence over organisational output without having to gain majority control over the party. This was as much a consequence of their having no obvious leadership candidate, and certainly none likely to achieve more support than Suárez, as of their interest in avoiding conflict. The critics - most of them politically distant from the President - realised that they had little hope of achieving dominant organisational influence under the existing structures: "la elección al comité ejecutivo por lista mayoritaria tiene como objetivo el hacer depender cualquier puesto ejecutivo en el partido de la voluntad del presidente"<sup>88</sup>.

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<sup>87</sup> Indeed, even by October 1982, only a few hundred of UCD's 150,000 members had actually left the party, and its electoral propaganda emphasised that 97% of its founder members remained in the party; Amodia, "The Union of the Democratic Centre", Op.cit., p.25.

<sup>88</sup> Eduardo Merigó, "Familias o corrientes ideológicas", Diario 16, 18 December 1980, p.3.

The presidential model of party organisation was itself a function of Suárez's initial powerful leadership position, and it was difficult for such a system to be conceived and begin to operate without a dominant leader. Suárez's leadership was not charismatic in the Weberian sense, but for a short time was extraordinarily dominant, and the way in which his authority was exercised was another major cause of discontent in the critical sector. It has been argued that Suárez's lack of intellectual weight and his humble social extraction undermined his authority amongst many senior members of the UCD elite<sup>89</sup>. Beyond this question, there is no doubt that part of the critical movement was inspired by disappointment at Suárez's poor leadership performance after the 1979 elections, and frustration at the impossibility of the party intervening to resolve the crisis under the presidentialist structures<sup>90</sup>. These structures made it theoretically possible for the party to be run in the interests of 51% of the delegates at party Congress, and unlike a proportional system, was largely insensitive to shifts in the bargaining positions of the various party groups and actors.

Having failed to achieve reform through the Executive Committee, the critics opted for confrontation and presented an alternative list at the Palma Congress, headed by Landelino Lavilla. Lavilla stated that his position was that the party had to acquire institutionalised means of overcoming leadership crises:

Lo importante es que el partido tenga entidad y vigor propio, que no sea mero reflejo de su líder, ni se convierta en una organización colgada de él y a su servicio (...) Un partido democrático ha de tener mecanismos y vitalidad para sustituir a sus líderes con normalidad y sin traumas cuando resulte evidente su desgaste (...) <sup>91</sup>.

These considerations could only be interpreted by Suárez and the party apparatus as an assault on the UCD leadership, thus exacerbating the polarising effect of the party Statutes. This inevitably led to a personalisation of the conflict even though there was more at stake than the leadership of Adolfo Suárez. In these conditions, it was difficult for the internal debate on resolving the UCD crisis to proceed in a constructive atmosphere. This personalisation also had divisive effects by distracting attention from the common ground which existed between

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<sup>89</sup> Caciagli, Elecciones y partidos en la transición española, Op.cit., pp.270-273.

<sup>90</sup> See for example the provocative article by Jesús Esperabé asking for Suárez's resignation: "Suárez y sus cosas", Diario 16, 28 January 1981, p.3. Curiously Suárez did indeed resign two days later.

<sup>91</sup> Interview with Landelino Lavilla, "Landelino se enfrenta a Suárez", Diario 16, 12 January 1981, p.1.

critics and supporters of Suárez. In the words of Martín Villa, who did not support the critical movement, "los críticos creían, como creíamos más, que las cosas no iban bien, y quizás nosotros tomamos el camino de tratar, respecto de Suárez, que él mismo hiciera las rectificaciones necesarias, y ellos, pues planteaban un sistema organizativo distinto"<sup>92</sup>.

The reaction of the party leadership to the critics' organisational challenge brought an escalation of the conflict. If conservative sectors of the party were already uneasy at the way in which the party bureaucracy and central apparatus were run, the preparations for the Palma Congress aggravated this unease considerably. Arias Salgado's interpretation of internal conflict leaves no doubt as to the leadership's view of the critical movement:

Los problemas son inevitables porque siempre las corrientes quieren más. Pero yo siempre pienso que los partidos son realidades conflictivas, y que hay que conducirlos y sobrellevarlos según su verdadera naturaleza. Lo que pasa es que hay que compatibilizar eso con la unidad básica de la organización. Hay un momento en el que el ego o la corriente entran en conflicto con el todo de la organización, y en ese momento debe prevalecer la organización<sup>93</sup>.

This perspective saw the party leader as representing the collective interest of the organisation, and justified the rigorous exercise of leadership authority to prevent the organisation being undermined by the subgroups' struggle for power. An obvious weakness of this position was that the party leader was in fact the focus of much of the internal opposition, and the conflict became all the more dramatic and tense as a result of Suárez's surprise resignation as President of the Government and of UCD, only days before the party Congress began.

It is not clear to what extent this decision formed part of the internal power game, or whether it was a response to irresistible external pressures. The period from autumn 1980 until February 1981 was dominated by an atmosphere of political crisis, with the emergence or reported emergence of a series of "operations" or conspiracies, some of them political, some military, and all aimed at the removal of Suárez from the Presidency<sup>94</sup>. Suárez was well aware of this: in November 1980, the State Information Services provided him with a

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<sup>92</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Martín Villa, September 1993.

<sup>93</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>94</sup> See for example Pilar Urbano, *Con la venia... Yo indagué el 23-F*, Barcelona, Argos Vergara, 1982, pp.29-55; Amadeo Martínez Inglés, *La transición vigilada*, Madrid, Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 1994, pp.95-111.

report revealing that there were three military conspiracies, and one project combining civil and military elements, as well as various political operations designed to force him out of the Presidency<sup>95</sup>. In the political sphere, two different plans involving the PSOE both envisaged a censure motion in January or February 1981, which Suárez was in grave danger of losing<sup>96</sup>. A further two conspiracies involved sectors of UCD: the Christian Democrats, whose assault on Suárez's leadership was unleashed the following month<sup>97</sup>, and Martin Villa's group, which had established contacts with both the PSOE and AP<sup>98</sup>. It seemed unlikely that Suárez could survive these political threats for much longer.

The resignation was also motivated by powerful military pressures. Suárez was fully informed of the military situation, and a recent book has stated bluntly that he was forced into resignation by the King in order to avoid a military coup<sup>99</sup>. The military pressures were aggravated by the terrorist campaign of ETA in the month of November 1980, which emphasised the governmental crisis and exhausted the patience of the interventionist elements in the military. A further external blow to Suárez's authority was the deterioration in his relations with the King, unhappy with the situation of crisis and concerned with controlling the unstable military hierarchy<sup>100</sup>. Along with the withdrawal of support from the economic powers and the Church, the institutional position of the Presidency was gravely debilitated.

Whatever the true reasons behind the resignation, it did little to ease the tensions arising from the approach of the Palma Congress. The almost immediate proposal of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo to replace him as President of the Government was condemned for excluding the party structures from such an important decision. The discussion of Suárez's replacement took place more or less entirely within the Permanent Commission amongst the party barons, and the decision was presented to the Executive Committee as a fait accompli. Many of the

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<sup>95</sup> "Panorámica de las operaciones en marcha", published in Prieto and Barbería, El enigma del elefante, Op.cit., pp.280-293.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., pp.283-284.

<sup>97</sup> According to Meliá, with the financial help for the big banks, and the support of the new Papal Nuncio, Innocenti (Así cayó Adolfo Suárez, Op.cit., p.59).

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., pp.281-282.

<sup>99</sup> Martínez Inglés, La transición vigilada, Op.cit., pp.113-139.

<sup>100</sup> José Oneto, Los últimos días del presidente, Barcelona, Planeta, 1981, p.87.

critics were happy to remove Suárez, but the fact that the President himself and a handful of close collaborators chose his successor without consulting the party seemed to underline their complaints about the party's functioning, although the political tension and rumours of military intervention precluded protracted internal negotiations.

Neither did Suárez's resignation mean that he was more willing to reach a compromise with the critics. Instead the apparatus continued preparing to take the majoritarian formula of internal elections to its logical conclusion and ensure that the critical lists were soundly beaten in the elections to be held in the Palma Congress. It is difficult to gauge quite to what extent authoritarian methods were used, as most evidence is subjective and the issue is controversial<sup>101</sup>. According to one leading critic:

Suárez se empeñó en ganar arrasando el Congreso, y empiezan a sonar los teléfonos de la gente de provincias diciendo que aquí el Gobernador Civil tiene instrucciones de montar dos listas, la mayoritaria y la segunda, para copar un 100% de los compromisarios del Congreso, mayoría y minoría, sin pactarlas ni consensuarlas<sup>102</sup>.

These strong-arm tactics led opponents of the leadership's methods (generally Christian Democrats and Liberals) to draw up joint lists, in order to win at least the minority delegation to the Congress and out-manoeuvre the apparatus's strategy to defeat the critics on both lists. According to this interpretation, the critical movement was a defensive response to the leadership's attempt to crush all internal opposition.

Leadership sources tell a different story. Arias Salgado sees the critical movement as a last-ditch attempt by UCD conservatives to take over the party: "un grupo de individuos se da cuenta de que por la base UCD está cambiando, y ellos han perdido el control"<sup>103</sup>. The apparatus's efforts to ensure control over the provincial structure of the party had indeed undermined the position of those parliamentarians associated with the original UCD factions. In particular, the statutory role of the provincial organisation in the drawing up of electoral

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<sup>101</sup> Many press reports talked of such manoeuvres: "Presunto control de gobernadores sobre los compromisarios de UCD", *Diario 16*, 16 December 1980, p.5; "Los críticos acusan el aparato de manipulador", *Diario 16*, 21 January 1981, p.5 (it should be pointed out that *Diario 16* was close to the Liberal faction, and the critics in general, and cannot be regarded as a dispassionate observer). A leading critic, Herrero, claims that "los intentos de mediación (...) fueron inútiles y se impuso la más dura y agresiva de las respuestas" (*Memorias de estío*, Op.cit., p.230).

<sup>102</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

lists destabilised the relationship between the parliamentary group and the party apparatus. Deputies in conflict with their Provincial Secretaries ran the risk of being excluded, or poorly placed, on the party lists, and with the probability of a Socialist victory making UCD's electoral resources increasingly scarce, the room for negotiation narrowed considerably<sup>104</sup>. To an extent therefore, the critical movement was the response of the less suarista parliamentarians to the establishment of a non-factional party bureaucracy which threatened their political careers; the signatures of so many parliamentarians on the "Manifiesto de los 200"<sup>105</sup> are an indication of this.

The tensions between critics and officials were aggravated by the accusations that the party leadership and the apparatus used "Francoist" methods. The division between those factions whose members had emerged from the structures of the Franco regime, and those factions more associated with the tolerated opposition to it, became an issue in the period preceding the Palma Congress. One critic explained the hard-line approach of the apparatus towards internal dissent in terms of UCD officials' lack of democratic experience:

La estructura de cualquier asociación política no es sólo de los que la dirigen, sino que está sobre todo al servicio de los militantes. Esto (...) se explica porque muchos dirigentes de UCD o de otros partidos políticos no han tenido tiempo de formarse o han desconocido la praxis de la democracia y de las libertades<sup>106</sup>.

These statements were part of the critics' strategy to discredit the presidential model of party organisation. The aim was to present the leadership and the party apparatus as remnants of the Franco regime, whilst the critics, some of whom had taken part in testimonial opposition to the dictatorship, claimed to represent democratic values and experience of the dynamics of real political parties<sup>107</sup>.

This was an exaggeration which was not borne out by the facts - for instance one of the fiercest advocates of the majoritarian position, Arias Salgado, had been a member of the

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<sup>104</sup> See Javier del Moral, El centro de la derecha, Op.cit., pp.205-212.

<sup>105</sup> In total, 47 deputies and 47 senators - over a third of UCD parliamentarians - signed the document.

<sup>106</sup> Joaquín Muñoz Peirats, "Las diferencias de opinión", Diario 16, 23 January 1981, p.2.

<sup>107</sup> See for example the article by Pedro J. Ramírez, a journalist supportive of the critics: "Democracia contra franquismo", Diario 16, 19 January 1981, p.3. A similar position is adopted by the critic Emilio Attard in his memoirs: Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit.



tolerated opposition, whereas Landelino Lavilla, the critics' candidate for the UCD presidency, had served the dictatorship as a political appointee. However, it is clear that the party apparatus was willing to use methods which could be described as undemocratic. An example of this was Suárez's proposal to change the party's internal electoral system, apparently to increase its proportionality<sup>108</sup>. The critics' initial reaction to this was to accuse Suárez of opportunism<sup>109</sup>, but only later was it realised that in effect, this system allowed delegates from the majority to decide which members of the critical list would be elected to the Executive Committee<sup>110</sup>. The use of such methods by the officials, and the Francoists-democrats dialectic encouraged by the critics, tended to exacerbate the already existing tensions in the organisation, and hinder any possibility of reconciliation between the two groups.

These factors contributed to making the internal conflict a particularly bitter one. The nature of the party Statutes, and their interpretation by the apparatus, both in the organisational development of the party from 1978-80 and in the preparation of the Palma Congress, raised the stakes of the critics' challenge. This made the Congress appear a zero-sum game; victory for either side would mean the destruction of the other. The emergence of exit-options for discontented or marginalised UCD parliamentarians encouraged this perception of the internal conflict; many were likely to feel that if UCD could not be changed, than they would have to pursue their political careers in some other organisation. The increasingly confrontational nature of the debate eroded the personal and political relations between rival factions and leaders, further undermining organisational cooperation.

The results of the votes taken at the Palma Congress show the inappropriateness of the majoritarian strategy in the absence of a powerful party leader. Table 6.4. reveals the polarisation between critical and official positions at the Congress. The high scores achieved by the critics indicate that the imposition of the majority position could not be achieved

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<sup>108</sup> The change involved the (still majoritarian) election of "open" lists for the Executive Committee, in which delegates would vote for candidates for President and Secretary General from one list, and then for candidates from any list for the remaining places on the Committee; see "Estatutos de Unión de Centro Democrático", *Revista de Derecho Político*, 10, Summer 1981, pp.195-227, Art.22.1 c). See also "Suárez encabezará una lista abierta en el Congreso de UCD", *Diario 16*, 21 January 1981, p.9.

<sup>109</sup> See the comments of Camuñas and Merigó in "Suárez votó contra lo que hoy dice asumir", *Diario 16*, 22 January 1981, p.5.

<sup>110</sup> See the comments made by Attard, *Vida y muerte de UCD*, Op.cit., p.189.

without resistance. For example in the vote for the election of the Executive Committee, 737 delegates (39.3%) voted for Landelino Lavilla's critical list, but only 7 critics found their way into the 37 strong Executive (18.9%). For a bloc representing more than a third of party delegates this representation was totally inadequate in securing a useful amount of influence in party decision-making.

This calls into question Huneus's argument that the emergence of the critical movement meant that the party had to move from a consociational to a majoritarian mode of conflict regulation. In fact the evidence is that the critical movement was the concrete demonstration of the failure of the majoritarianism inherent in the presidential model of party management which had been imposed from 1978-1980. The majority, which controlled the definition of organisational objectives and the appointments to political office, failed to distribute sufficient benefits to the party minority for their participation to appear worthwhile. Moreover the rigidity of the organisational rules prevented the increased autonomy of minority sub-groups being recognised in the party's decision-making process, and allowed the shifts in the internal balance of power to be ignored by the party leadership. The Palma Congress effectively consolidated the position of the existing dominant coalition in the party's decision-making structures, despite the demonstrated inability of this coalition to secure the firm allegiance of a significant section of the parliamentary group and to resist external pressures. The polarisation and deadlock of the 2nd party Congress suggested that a more coalitional or negotiated form of party management was necessary, but the results of conference votes denied the organisation an appropriate framework for such negotiations.

#### **4. Back to the genetic model: Horizontal and vertical dimensions of internal conflict**

The failure of the majoritarian or presidential model and the conflict at Palma de Mallorca provides an opportunity to examine the organisational development of UCD since its creation. Analysis of the composition of the two opposing blocs of officials and critics can shed some light on the relationship between types of organisational expansion and the consolidation of political parties. The failure of around a third of party delegates to support the presidential line at the party Congress pointed to a sharp decline in the party's internal coherence. By studying the relationship between the critical movement and elements of penetration and diffusion in the party's genetic model, the usefulness of these concepts in

explaining the emergence of stable interdependency can be assessed. In this way it should be possible to assess to what extent the failure of Suárez's project of presidentialisation can be explained by the way in which the party was created.

The hypothesis that organisational expansion by penetration (government intervention, in the case of UCD) favours internal coherence rests on the assumption that the centralisation of control over resources creates subgroup interdependency. Chapter 2 analysed the establishment of UCD candidacies in the provinces, and Chapter 4 the organisational development of the party's provincial branches. This provides the opportunity to test the above hypothesis on the vertical or territorial dimension. If penetration does promote subgroup interdependency, then the critical movement should have been strongest in those provinces which most successfully resisted presidential control.

Table 6.5. presents a typology of provinces and the relationship between types of development and the implantation of the critical movement. First of all, it should be pointed out that the movement was present in virtually all provinces, with only Castellón, Huelva, Burgos, Badajoz, Orense and Cádiz maintaining total unity in support of the official position. However the distribution of critics across the Spanish territory does give some indication of the effects of the genetic model on the party's internal coherence. As would be expected, the critics had a disproportionately strong presence in those provinces placed in the category of coalitional domination in the analysis in Chapter 2. Indeed, 10 out of the 11 most "critical" provinces fell under this category. In particular, Madrid, with powerful representatives of all the major factions, provided a considerable number of signatures to the critics' documents, as did Palencia, Valladolid, Valencia, Oviedo, Almería and Albacete, all provinces where the coalitional parties had been able to dominate the party lists in 1977.

It is also worth noting that those provinces in the category of government intervention in the genetic model which did contribute numbers to the critical movement were somewhat anomalous. In Jaén, for instance, the party had been dominated by Independents in 1977, but in 1979 Landelino Lavilla was sent to head the party list, and subsequently built a power base there. Other provinces with a strong "critical" presence in the run-up to the Palma Congress also had distinguishing features. In Vizcaya the party had been established in 1977 by a small group of Independents and Social Democrats, but in 1978 a group of Christian Democrats under Julén Guimón joined, taking the post of Secretary General. In Salamanca, Zaragoza and Granada, the provincial organisation was divided between Independents and Social Democrats.

Where presidential domination remained undiluted, such as in Burgos, Alava, Huelva, León, Santander and the Catalan provinces, disciplined support of the party leadership was maintained. This data tends to support the hypothesis that penetration, in this study understood to mean territorial expansion under the direction of the President or his closest collaborators, does seem to encourage interdependency and cooperation through central control.

So the data does to a degree support Panebianco's hypothesis on the relationship between types of organisational expansion and internal coherence. Where zones of organisational uncertainty such as control over the provincial leadership, the support of the provincial membership or the parliamentary representation of a province were in the hands of coalitional groups, dissidence emerged more strongly. This indicates that the centralised presidential structure was undermined by the elements of diffusion present in the party's initial expansion, which allowed some provincial sub-groups sufficient autonomy to challenge the party leadership. But the consequences of different types of territorial expansion can only be properly understood in terms of the other key variable which contributes to explaining the presence or absence of dissidence amongst UCD parliamentarians and Congress delegates: factional ascription. What is most notable about the group of provinces in which the critical movement emerged most strongly is the predominance of the Christian Democrat faction, and to a lesser extent the Liberals and Tácitos. The control of Lavilla over the party in Jaén has already been mentioned, and that province provided 11 signatures to the "manifiesto de los 200". Similarly, 14 signatures came from Palencia, dominated by Alvarez de Miranda, 8 from Guadalajara (Luis de Grandes) and 9 from Oviedo (where Vega Escandón had been the party's first Regional President). Control over the UCD in Tenerife (11 signatures) was shared between Christian Democrats and Liberals, and Ignacio Camuñas, one of the main instigators of the critical movement, controlled Valladolid (7 signatures). Similarly, Social Democrats, with a handful of exceptions, were conspicuously absent from the critical movement, irrespective of elements of diffusion in territorial expansion.

Moreover, provinces such as Granada, Zaragoza and Salamanca, where presidential intervention had been significant in the development of the provincial parties, each produced 6 signatories of the critical document (amongst them 11 parliamentarians). As has been mentioned, critics were present in almost all provinces, despite the fact that the provincial leadership was generally under the firm control of the party apparatus. For instance 14 provinces in the government intervention category, where the provincial leadership was in

"safe" hands (Independents or Social Democrats)<sup>111</sup>, provided 27 critics between them, 21 of them parliamentarians. This tends to undermine the explanation of dissidence purely in terms of organisational autonomy on the part of critical groups; in many cases those signing up to join the critical movement were very much dependent on the party's central and provincial leadership. Indeed their dissidence was essentially a protest against this situation of dependency, and the lack of organisational influence it implied. The predominance in the critical movement of parliamentarians, many of them from provinces controlled by the apparatus, suggests that the tensions between party bureaucrats and the parliamentary elite were an important source of dissidence.

The critical movement therefore cannot be explained without reference to the horizontal dimension of internal coherence. The conflict within UCD in 1980-81 was above all else a factional conflict. Certainly the decline in centralised control over zones of uncertainty facilitated the emergence of conflict. But, as was argued at the beginning of this Chapter, what was at issue were the policies followed by the UCD Government, and the inability of the conservative minority in the party to influence the definition of party and Government objectives. The UCD conflict, whilst not strictly speaking an ideological split, was certainly a split over the political output of the organisation, dividing the party into pragmatic presidentialists, supporting a strategy of electoral competition with the PSOE, and a more conservative group which emphasised a narrower constituency representation through the "mayoría natural".

Table 6.1. shows conclusively that the critical movement was dominated by the most conservative factions. The strongest groups in the official and time-server categories are the Social Democrats, Regionalists and Independents - the groups closest to the party leadership. Independents are also strong in the critical movement, but most of them are senators (26 out of 38), who as was seen in Chapter 4 tended not to be close to Suárez. The next strongest group in the critical movement are the Christian Democrats, followed by the Liberals and Partido Popular (including Tácitos, recently marginalised from the dominant coalition) - the most conservative UCD factions, largely excluded from the party's dominant coalition. Factional membership is the key factor determining the positions taken by UCD parliamentarians in the internal conflict. These data show that the horizontal dimension of

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<sup>111</sup> These provinces are Alava, Avila, Barcelona, Ceuta, Córdoba, Cuenca, Gerona, León, Lérída, Logroño, Lugo, Pontevedra, Santander, Tarragona.

organisational coherence is very successful in explaining adherence to the critical movement, and these findings are consistent with the explanations presented in the rest of this Chapter. The conflict was the response of conservative factions to their marginalisation from party decision-making, and an attempt to regain organisational influence. The encouragement these factions received from external organisations, and the potential for exit provided by them, enabled the critical movement to challenge the party leadership in spite of the conservative factions' marginal position within the organisation.

The differences in policy preferences between Liberals and Christian Democrats and the one hand and Social Democrats and Independents on the other were identifiable from the UCD's formation. Dissidence was strongest in provinces where the party had emerged under coalitional domination - an adaptation of the concept of expansion by diffusion - but the nature of organisational expansion cannot explain the internal conflict alone. The analysis of the data presented here indicates that factional ascription is a better predictor of organisational loyalties than territorial ties, although the vertical dimension does act to reinforce the effect of factional divisions. The importance of territorial autonomy can be seen in the involvement in the critical movement of UCD senators, many of them Independents: 53 out of a parliamentary group of 120. These senators often had important autonomous resources in the form of economic (often agricultural) interests in their provinces, suggesting a relationship between autonomy from the leadership and dissidence. However this dissidence can also be explained in terms of the more conservative characteristics of UCD candidates for the Upper Chamber. The involvement of senators also emphasises that the critical movement was aimed at acquiring organisational influence for minority sectors of UCD; the senators had been marginalised from policy-making and largely ignored by the party leadership. The horizontal dimension of party coherence is the most successful explanatory variable, confirming that factional disagreement over organisational output is a source of incoherence even in a situation of subgroup dependency on a centralised leadership.

This dependency extended to both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of organisational activity. The critics were still in a relationship of interdependency with regard to the dominant factions in terms of achieving influence over government output (there were no alternative parliamentary alliances available to them which could exclude the dominant coalition). Moreover, in early 1981 there was no evidence that the critics, despite their external support, could win power in a general election outside UCD; UCD was performing

badly in regional elections and opinion polls, but the main beneficiary was the PSOE, an unlikely ally for conservative critics. Finally, in terms of internal organisational dynamics, many of the critics were in a weak position within their provincial organisations, and thus largely dependent on the dominant coalition for any influence they could exert on party decision-making. The rebellion of the most conservative UCD factions, and the destructive consequences it had for the whole party, suggest that "coercive participation" is an unstable kind of commitment mechanism, and that a political organisation cannot be run without the basic consent of all its components, however low their autonomy in relation to the dominant organisational actors. The elements of coalitional domination in the party's creation were ultimately a source of conflict because of the attempt by the dominant coalition to exclude some party sub-groups from the decision-making structures. But it can also be argued that the elements of penetration or government intervention in the party's genetic model were equally responsible for conflict, since they encouraged the creation of a highly centralised structure which failed to accommodate the diversity of objectives between the sub-groups.

## 5. Conclusion

The emergence of the critical movement, and the imposition of the presidentialist majority to defeat it at the Palma Congress, left the party deeply divided. In the words of the prominent critic Emilio Attard, "quedó claro que del Congreso partiría la quiebra de UCD"<sup>112</sup>. The sources of interdependency of UCD sub-groups at the foundation of the organisation had been seriously undermined by developments after the end of the constituent process, which weakened the party leadership's control over key resources and strengthened the position of the marginalised conservative factions, who demanded UCD become a different kind of party.

That these changes should have threatened the party's very survival can be attributed to the peculiarities of the party's Statutes, and in particular the majoritarian nature of the internal power games. The "winner takes all" logic of internal elections meant that ultimately the minority factions were coerced into accepting leadership decisions, as their dependency on the dominant coalition precluded them from challenging these decisions. But the voluntary

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<sup>112</sup> Emilio Attard, *Vida y muerte de UCD*, Op.cit., p.207.

nature of participation in a political party implied that this dependency could only be sustained whilst there was some convergence of interests between all the component groups, or at least the possibility of exercising voice. As interests diverged after 1979, coercion met opposition, and UCD's declining autonomy gave this opposition increased organisational resources, which it used to challenge the presidential structures and push the party in a direction unacceptable to the existing leadership (and to many of the party's voters).

The construction of a significant internal opposition whose most explicit objective was to radically overhaul the party's Statutes undermined the legitimacy of the party leadership, elected under these Statutes, for a significant sector of the party membership. The rejection of the Statutes by around a third of conference delegates suggested that they no longer reflected the real power structure existing within the party, an indication of low institutionalisation and organisational vulnerability<sup>113</sup>. Kitschelt argues that "an organisation enjoys legitimacy when its members accept its decisions as authoritative and final even if they personally disagree with them"<sup>114</sup>; the critics in UCD were unprepared to accept leadership decisions in large part because they fundamentally disagreed with the way in which decisions were taken and the leadership selected. The Statutes denied them voice, and biased internal bargaining processes in favour of a debilitated dominant coalition. The critics' rejection of the centrist strategy followed by this dominant coalition, and the support they received from influential external interests, encouraged them to defy the party leadership and continue to push for organisational reform and strategic changes. As the next Chapter will attempt to explain, these were the fundamental causes of the party's collapse in 1981-82.

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<sup>113</sup> Panebianco, Political parties, Op.cit., p.59.

<sup>114</sup> Kitschelt, The logics of party formation, Op. cit., p.130.



## **CHAPTER 7: LIFE AFTER SUAREZ? THE CALVO SOTELO PRESIDENCY AND PARTY DISINTEGRATION**

### **1. Introduction**

The Palma Congress was the prelude to the rapid disintegration of UCD between October 1981 and July 1982. This chaotic situation led to UCD having four different party leaders in the 20 months between January 1981 and October 1982<sup>1</sup>. This Chapter aims to explain the final collapse of the organisation - the exit of key elite participants and most of the party's electorate - in terms of the variables already analysed in previous Chapters, and to examine the reasons why the changes in the party leadership failed to overcome the internal crisis.

### **2. The aftermath of the Palma Congress**

#### **2.1. Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo and the political climate after the 23-F**

The bitterness of the conflict between officials and critics created the basic conditions for the disintegration of UCD. Indeed one former UCD leader has gone as far as to say that "el Congreso de Palma fue prácticamente la sentencia de muerte para UCD"<sup>2</sup>. However that is not to say that nothing could have been done to save the party from the destructive effects of internal polarisation. This polarisation was in large part the result of disagreement over government action, and the failings of the last UCD Governments presided by Adolfo Suárez. There is no doubt that a period of effective and successful UCD Government would have gone a long way towards resolving the party's internal crisis, and whilst Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo's Government was weakened by the UCD's internal problems, it was strengthened by the wider developments following the attempted coup of the 23rd February 1981.

The 23-F had a chastening effect on the Spanish political elite. The PSOE leadership, which had mercilessly harried the UCD Government since early 1980, suspended its aggressive opposition campaign and offered the Calvo Sotelo Government full cooperation

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<sup>1</sup> This striking fact was pointed out to me in my interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>2</sup> Interview C36.

in consolidating the democratic institutions, and in particular in resolving the regional problem, seen as a major cause of golpismo. This cooperation culminated in a pact for the "harmonisation" of the devolution process, which took the legislative form of Socialist parliamentary support for the LOAPA (a law "harmonising", in a restrictive direction, the process of devolution). Similarly, an important agreement between employers and trades unions was reached with the signing of the ANE (Acuerdo Nacional del Empleo)<sup>3</sup>. These developments suggested a return to the formula of consensus which had been successful in the constituent process, and the outcome was decidedly favourable to the UCD Government.

The improvement in the party's fortunes was not only a function of the gentler political climate following the 23-F. Adolfo Suárez's leadership style had been a major source of discontent within UCD in 1979-80, and his replacement with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo was initially successful in responding to this discontent. Calvo Sotelo's sober, patrician style gave an image of competence and assurance to the conduct of government where Suárez had let matters drift. One minister who served in this Government confirmed this: "Calvo Sotelo era un gran presidente del Consejo de Ministros, llevaba los Consejos de Ministros con una perfección, con mucha más dedicación, conocimiento de los temas y presencia que Suárez"<sup>4</sup>. Martín Villa, whose criticisms of Suárez had centred on his reluctance to grapple with the details of government policy, shared this view: "en un primer momento - hasta el final del verano del 81 - Calvo Sotelo es un gran presidente"<sup>5</sup>. As well as offering greater technical competence than his predecessor, he also initially replaced Suárez's tendency towards absenteeism with a more visible leadership style. He initially made an effort to provide parliamentary leadership, through his active involvement in his investiture debate, in marked contrast to Suárez's defensive attitude towards the Congress. He also made a number of gestures, such as attending the funerals of victims of terrorism, and meeting national and regional political leaders, in an attempt to avoid the hermetic isolation of the previous incumbent<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Justo Domínguez, "Diez años de relaciones laborales en España", in Angel Zaragoza (comp.), Pactos sociales, sindicatos y patronal en España, Op.cit., pp.75-106 (pp.85-87).

<sup>4</sup> Interview C34.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Martín Villa, September 1993.

<sup>6</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.335.

These changes in style, in conjunction with the constructive spirit of the opposition in the first half of 1981, brought Calvo Sotelo and his Government considerable popularity. Between March and April 1981 his approval rating in opinion polls rose from 25% to 45%<sup>7</sup>. The improvement in UCD's electoral potential is shown by the fact that Calvo Sotelo received strong pressures from other UCD leaders to dissolve parliament, in order to take advantage of what was unlikely to be a sustainable level of support<sup>8</sup>. In view of this, the failure to overcome the internal crisis of the Palma Congress requires explanation. This explanation does not hinge on the personal failings of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, but on the strategic decisions of the party sub-groups and the rigidities inherent in the presidential model of party organisation.

## 2.2. The "twin-headed party"

An examination of the arrangements for party management which emerged out of the Palma debacle must form part of any explanation of party collapse. The evident failure of the majoritarian strategy of conflict regulation, as practised until February 1981, suggested that a different approach to party management was needed if the organisation was to survive. As Huneus argues, "ante esas fuerzas centrífugas, deberían crearse mecanismos de integración que aseguraran la cohesión y estabilidad del partido"<sup>9</sup>. In the absence of any basic consensus on party strategy, the presidential model could no longer be effectively applied, and instead a more negotiated order was required if any kind of lasting settlement was to be achieved.

Suárez's departure did bring about a basic change in the running of the party: the "dual presidency". Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo was selected as the UCD's candidate for the Presidency of the Government, whilst the UCD presidency fell upon Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún, a loyal ally to Suárez, who had headed the official list at the Palma Congress. In effect, the party therefore remained under Suárez's effective control, but the Government escaped his direct influence. It is generally accepted that Suárez chose Calvo Sotelo as his successor with the intention of returning to the Presidency in the medium term. One critic

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>9</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.314.

offered the following interpretation:

Leopoldo es elegido por Adolfo porque no le hacía sombra política. Adolfo pensaba que dejaba el poder en manos de un tecnócrata, y que iba a ser imposible que fuera popular políticamente, y que iban a volver a necesitarle a él. Está pensando en un presidente transitorio, por un año o dos, y el partido se lo tutela Sahagún<sup>10</sup>.

So to an extent the changes resulting from Suárez's resignation were not so radical as they appeared. Calvo Sotelo was in effect subject to a pact with Suárez, in which the new President of the Government would not be permitted to depart from the strategy followed by his predecessor if he wished to maintain the support of the party apparatus.

The new Government named by Calvo Sotelo in February 1981 carefully maintained the balance struck in Suárez's last Government, and virtually all the key ministries remained in the same hands (see Table 7.1.); as Calvo Sotelo himself has claimed, "mi Gobierno fue de perfecta continuidad con Adolfo Suárez"<sup>11</sup>. This, and the former President's domination of the new Executive Committee (see Table 7.2.), led one critic to suggest that "después del Congreso de Palma, la cuota de poder de Adolfo Suárez es, posiblemente, algunos puntos superior a la que tenía antes"<sup>12</sup>. Certainly, beyond the institutional weight of the office he had come to occupy, Calvo Sotelo had few autonomously controlled political resources. Importantly, he was not associated with any faction, and had no independent power base; in his own words, "tenía ciertamente el status de barón de UCD, pero un barón atípico, acampado en las afueras de la organización"<sup>13</sup>. Whereas Suárez had earned his presidency by winning two elections as party leader, Calvo Sotelo had passed no comparable electoral tests, and his relationship with UCD parliamentarians would therefore not be based on his control over key electoral resources. Adolfo Suárez, despite his failures, was still the founder of UCD, and the man responsible for its early successes, as is indicated by his being the most voted candidate at the Palma Congress. He also had enormous influence over the Executive Committee, 31 of whose members had been elected on "his" official list, and the party

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992. See also Miguel Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., pp.234-235.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, July 1993.

<sup>12</sup> Interview B2.

<sup>13</sup> Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.59.

apparatus, still controlled by a close ally, Calvo Ortega.

The dual presidency implied a radical change in the organisational configuration of UCD. In 1977-80, the party organisation (the apparatus, the Executive and the provincial network) had been effectively an appendage of the Government, serving to formalise Suárez's governmental authority and helping him mobilise electoral support when necessary. The party's presidentialist structures made it difficult for any movement of internal opposition to force concessions from the Presidency, and the real threat to Suárez's power instead came from the parliamentary group. With the separation of government and party leadership, the party began to lead an independent existence, and would no longer provide automatic support to the executive. At the same time, the Government still had to respond to the parliamentary group for its actions, and the polarisation between critics and presidentialists made it difficult to reconcile their demands. As a result, the dual presidency in fact created conflict between Government and party where it had not existed before:

La separación de la Presidencia del Gobierno y la Presidencia del partido le dio al partido otra dinámica completamente. Aumentó los conflictos entre partido y Gobierno, porque cuando había la absoluta identificación, no había discrepancias entre lo que hacía el partido y el Gobierno, en realidad el Gobierno mandaba sobre el partido, pero cuando se produce la separación de las Presidencias, a partir de ese momento hay una tensión, inevitablemente<sup>14</sup>.

The separation of party and government leadership, while formally limiting the degree of centralisation of power within UCD, did nothing to promote the kind of internal settlement which was required after the Palma Congress. The essential reason for this was the breakdown in the relationship between the two Presidents: Calvo Sotelo and Rodríguez Sahagún (acting for Adolfo Suárez). In order to understand the difficulties in the relationship between Government and party, another relationship must be examined: that between the Government and the critics in the UCD parliamentary group. In a matter of six months, Calvo Sotelo's honeymoon period came to an end, as relations deteriorated with both the conservative sectors of the parliamentary group, and the party apparatus controlled by Suárez<sup>15</sup>. Calvo Sotelo was essentially caught between the two poles which had emerged at the Palma Congress. The

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with Iñigo Caverio, July 1992.

<sup>15</sup> I will deal with these two different relationships in sequence, although this does not imply any logical or chronological order.

causes and consequences of this situation are analysed below.

### **3. Presidentialism with two presidents: The sources of organisational instability**

#### **3.1. Government vs. parliamentary group: Calvo Sotelo and the critics**

Any settlement of UCD's internal conflict had to satisfy the critics, whose presence in the parliamentary groups made them impossible to ignore if the Government was to survive. In fact, the Calvo Sotelo option briefly enjoyed the support of a number of significant figures in the critical movement<sup>16</sup>. Although Alzaga and Herrero refused to join the new Government and had refused to vote for Calvo Sotelo's candidacy in the Executive Committee meeting before the Palma Congress, they did offer tentative backing. Alzaga was appointed as a presidential advisor, and Herrero, according to his memoirs, promised cooperation in his role as spokesman of the parliamentary group<sup>17</sup>. The durability of Calvo Sotelo's Government was conditional on the support of the critics, who represented almost a third of UCD's deputies, and just under half its senators. It was therefore a severe blow to the new Government, and to UCD's chances of survival, that this support was almost immediately withdrawn.

The failure to win over the critics is not necessarily attributable to Calvo Sotelo's failings; there is strong evidence that some of them had already given up on UCD:

El grupo crítico pronto elimina su colaboración con Calvo Sotelo, porque ya en ese momento se estaba produciendo otro tipo de entendimiento directamente con Fraga. Desde el Congreso de Palma los críticos habían dado prácticamente por muerta UCD, y estaban ya imaginando otros proyectos. Hay una decisión tomada de alterar UCD, de decidir que el proyecto vital de UCD se ha acabado, ese esquema de partido amplio no tiene viabilidad y lo que hay que hacer es una definición mucho más precisa del espacio político, y esa definición hay que hacerla con AP. Esa es el planteamiento, y da lo mismo lo que haga Calvo Sotelo<sup>18</sup>.

A number of key critics undoubtedly did take this view, and they made impossible demands of Calvo Sotelo with the intention of destabilising, if not destroying, the party. The Palma

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<sup>16</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>17</sup> Herrero, *Memorias de estío*, Op.cit., pp.239-40.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

Congress, although a success in terms of mobilising a significant movement of internal opposition, was, in terms of the results of conference votes, a disastrous defeat for conservative sectors. A number of modifications were made to the statutes in which the party's collective decision-making bodies were given increased powers, but UCD remained a fundamentally presidentialist party. In the absence of reforms to the internal electoral system, the Congress had confirmed the presidentialists' domination of the party's decision-making mechanisms, and the conservatives were unable to achieve the dominant influence over the definition of organisational objectives that they sought. The critics had condemned the methods used by the party apparatus to win the Congress, and argued that the results of the Congress did not reflect the genuine will of the party membership. Aware that it would be impossible to take control of the party, many critics gave up on UCD, and instead turned to AP as the means of pursuing their aims. Evidently, the most effective way of strengthening AP was to weaken UCD, and there is little doubt that some critics set out to do this. UCD conservatives in the parliamentary group therefore decided to ignore the results of the Congress and pursue their aims by other means.

The adoption of such an attitude on the part of senior parliamentarians made party management impossible. It has already been suggested that a source of internal instability in 1979-80 was the lack of correspondence between the party statutes, which granted full powers to the party leader, and the real distribution of zones of uncertainty within the organisation. This situation was not resolved by the Palma Congress, and instead the delegitimation of the organisational rules was aggravated by the concentration of formal party authority around the UCD President, whose personal prestige and influence within the organisation was clearly insufficient to exercise this authority. Rodríguez Sahagún was a mere delegate, but had the President been Suárez himself, little would have changed. UCD as a party had always been essentially dependent on the Government, and its presidential statutes were drawn up on the assumption that the party leader was also President of the Government. In effect, the internal mechanisms of UCD were further discredited by the fact that Calvo Sotelo, who despite his political weakness represented the full weight of government power, was merely an ex-officio member of the party's Executive Committee.

The statutes were particularly delegitimised for the conservative critics, because they denied them organisational influence in accordance with their aspirations, and the zones of uncertainty they controlled. Their potential mediating role with external actors remained a

relevant organisational resource, and their exit options were if anything more feasible than before the Palma Congress. The "poderes fácticos" which had attempted to influence the balance of power within UCD, maintained their pressure for the creation of a conservative "mayoría natural", even at the expense of dismantling UCD<sup>19</sup>. As one former UCD minister close to financial circles explains:

Entre 1981-2 un sector importante de la vida pública y financiera española, por una serie de razones, entre las que está la de que UCD había hecho una política de centro-izquierda clara, extra muros de UCD se crea y se organiza una gran maniobra para partir UCD y elegir como líder de esa formación a Manuel Fraga. (...) Ahí influyó mucho el triunfo de Reagan y el triunfo de Margaret Thatcher, uno y otro hacen que aquí la derecha, la CEOE estaban convencidas de que dado el ambiente mundial era posible que aquí una oferta de derechas clara pudiera ganar<sup>20</sup>.

The enthusiasm of financial and business sectors to create a new conservative force, and the consequent availability of exit options for UCD conservatives, meant that critics could exact a high price for their cooperation with Calvo Sotelo's Government. The desertion of even a small number of critics could leave the Government in an unsustainable parliamentary position, providing them with considerable "blackmail potential"<sup>21</sup>. The critics correspondingly adopted an intransigent attitude, making internal bargaining difficult. In consequence, their increasingly high levels of autonomy were not matched by adaptations in the party's bargaining arrangements to permit them significant voice, or influence over party output.

All these factors encouraged the centrifugal tendencies within the UCD parliamentary group, further weakening the UCD minority Government. If senior critics had already given up on UCD, there was little Calvo Sotelo could do to maintain their support. In any case, whatever changes would have been necessary to satisfy conservative sectors, they were certainly not satisfied with the output of the new Government. As far as Miguel Herrero was concerned, the only differences with Suárez were quite superficial:

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<sup>19</sup> They also continued to pressurise the Government over economic policy; see CEOE, Una nueva política de empleo, Madrid, May 1981.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Alberto Oliart, September 1993.

<sup>21</sup> This potential should not be exaggerated, as the fall of the Government would probably have meant elections, and the need for the new conservative force to have an electoral machine ready.



Calvo Sotelo no cambió ni las personas ni los procedimientos para tomar decisiones ni, en consecuencia, éstas. Es decir, no remedió la incapacidad de decidir y de querer que había caracterizado la última época de su antecesor. (...) Tan sólo cambió los gestos<sup>22</sup>.

The Christian Democrat Oscar Alzaga, who initially acted as a presidential advisor, was also disappointed:

Yo creo que la situación durante el Gobierno de Calvo Sotelo fue a la postre mucho peor que con Suárez, porque no fue mejor presidente del Gobierno que Suárez - un presidente ausentista, sin capacidad de arbitraje entre los ministros - no configuró unos Gobiernos mejores que los de Adolfo, no es verdad esa tesis de que fue mejor parlamentario que Adolfo, porque fue un parlamentario muy ausentista, el grupo parlamentario siguió sin criterios, sin directrices<sup>23</sup>.

As far as conservatives in the parliamentary group (the only UCD body in which they had a significant presence) were concerned, the relationship between Government and parliamentarians remained unsatisfactory. Again, this was in part a consequence of the lack of correspondence between the party statutes and the real distribution of bargaining power within the organisation. According to UCD's statutes the responsibility for coordination of the government and parliamentary fronts lay with the party President<sup>24</sup> (Sahagún), and by delegation the Secretary General (Calvo Ortega), who presided over the plenary meetings of the parliamentary group<sup>25</sup>. This left Government-parliamentary group relations under the continued control of Suárez's closest allies, a situation not helped by the group's spokesman being Herrero, one of Suárez's most prominent opponents.

The principal reason for the UCD conservatives' dissatisfaction was Calvo Sotelo's refusal, or inability, to opt for a strategy of parliamentary alliances (particularly with AP) in order to anchor UCD to the right. In crude terms, Calvo Sotelo did not give the critics what they wanted - the "mayoría natural" and conservative policies. In part this was due to his lacking statutory power to direct the parliamentary group; Calvo Ortega would obviously

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<sup>22</sup> Herrero, *Memorias de estío*, Op.cit., p.240.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>24</sup> "Estatutos de Unión de Centro Democrático" (1981), Op.cit., Article 24.2.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., Article 26.2., b) and e).

block any move towards the "mayoría natural". But it is not clear that Calvo Sotelo wanted to follow such a strategy, particularly since the post-coup climate made it easier for him to build ad hoc majorities, in particular with the support of the PSOE, than it had been for Suárez in 1979-80. The conservatives opposed this approach, since it required "concessions" to the left and undermined their influence over the party's decision-making process:

Es claro que la huida de la mayoría, con la consiguiente necesidad de pacto con la oposición y, sobre todo, la hipercotización del voto marginal colocan el centro de la gravedad, tanto de la mayoría accidental - a construir en cada caso - como en el seno de la minoría mayoritaria, muy lejos de quienes tienen verdadero peso, tanto por su calidad como por su representatividad de cara al electorado y a las fuerzas sociales que lo articulen. Ello da lugar a una refracción del voto mayoritario hasta llegar a unos resultados políticos irreconocibles por el propio electorado<sup>26</sup>.

UCD conservatives were aware that their marginalisation was a result of the high exit potential of the UCD left and the other parliamentary forces with which the party had tended to negotiate parliamentary votes. They therefore demanded the construction of the "mayoría natural" which would shift the centre of gravity in UCD in their direction. This would allow them greater influence over party decision-making, by making their votes more valuable and increasing their "blackmail potential". When it became evident that Calvo Sotelo either would not or could not adopt this strategy, they soon began to seek extra-party means of imposing it. It appears that in the case of the Christian Democrat critics, this conclusion was arrived at very quickly. According to Alberto Oliart, an ally of Calvo Sotelo,

Yo intenté durante todo el período inicial desde febrero hasta junio 1981 formar un grupo de democristianos, liberales e independientes para apoyar la gestión de Calvo Sotelo dentro de UCD. Y los primeros que dejan de ir a las reuniones son los democristianos. Ellos ya iban por otra parte. Ya desde abril de 1981<sup>27</sup>.

The statutes severely restricted Calvo Sotelo's room for manoeuvre, and lacking an independent power base in the party, he was in no position to propose major initiatives to keep the critics inside UCD.

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<sup>26</sup> Miguel Herrero, "Hacia la nueva mayoría", lecture given at the Instituto de Empresa, Madrid, 11 May 1981; reproduced in Ideas para moderados, Op.cit., pp.122-127 (p.126).

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Alberto Oliart, September 1993.

### 3.2. Government vs. party apparatus: Calvo Sotelo and the suaristas<sup>28</sup>

The dilemma facing Calvo Sotelo in this period was acute, in that the support of UCD conservatives, without whom it was impossible to govern, required a clear break with past practice. At the same time, the support of the party apparatus - and a sector of the parliamentary group - was conditional on no such break taking place, as Suárez had made it clear that the "mayoría natural" was unacceptable. Whilst the critics soon realised that Calvo Sotelo could not bring about the desired change, the party apparatus also adopted a hostile attitude towards the President of the Government's hesitant attempts to appease the critics.

The reasons for this were partly political, but were aggravated by more personal considerations. The initial success of Calvo Sotelo's Government was not part of Suárez's plan, and apparently was not well received. According to Calvo Sotelo, "cuando él volvió, se encontró con que yo inicialmente tenía un éxito de prensa, y él estaba muy disgustado. Fue mi adversario durante todo mi Gobierno"<sup>29</sup>. This interpretation is confirmed by Arias Salgado, one of Suárez's key advisors in this period: "el Gobierno de Calvo Sotelo tiene seis meses fecundos. Suárez se pone nervioso porque ve que UCD funciona sin él, y que además está emergiendo un centro de poder real que no es él"<sup>30</sup>. The relationship between Calvo Sotelo and his predecessor, always likely to be a difficult one, was also undermined by a series of "diplomatic incidents" which contributed to a climate of mistrust between the two men<sup>31</sup>.

Whilst Calvo Sotelo failed to satisfy the critics' demands, he did take sufficient distance from Suárez's position to alienate the party apparatus. One of the principal reasons for Suárez proposing Calvo Sotelo was the fact that he would be a more acceptable candidate for financial and business sectors. The new President carefully avoided the kind of

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<sup>28</sup> This term refers not only to the Independents close to Suárez, but also members of the Partido Popular and some Social Democrats who, by 1981, were more closely associated with Suárez than with their original faction leaders.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, July 1993.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>31</sup> In the words of Arias Salgado, "el entorno de Calvo Sotelo no fue muy ábil en la relación con Suárez; hay una serie de pequeñas historias que irritan a Suárez e irritan a Sahagún" (interview, June 1992). Calvo Sotelo's version of events can be found in Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., pp.66-71.

"progressive" rhetoric associated with Suárez and the Social Democrat faction, and one source close to Suárez has claimed that

Hubo un intento, por parte de Calvo Sotelo, de despegarse de Suárez, para que no le ocurrieran a él, con sectores poderosos de la sociedad española, los problemas que Suárez tenía (...) y por tanto, aglutinar en torno suyo a la CEOE, a sectores bancarios (...). Ahí marcó una serie de diferencias con Suárez tremendas<sup>32</sup>.

As has been seen, this failed to win over the CEOE, who were determined to force a UCD-AP alliance, and continued their assault on Calvo Sotelo's Government. However, even some Christian Democrats confirmed that the new President did make an effort to distance himself from Suárez. According to one minister in Calvo Sotelo's Government,

Cuando Suárez dejó el Gobierno, lo dejó quizás con la esperanza de poder volver pasado algún tiempo (...). Y en cambio se encontró que era un Calvo Sotelo que de repente se fue distanciando cada vez más de Suárez, no asumía el papel que Suárez esperaba de él<sup>33</sup>.

There is little doubt that Calvo Sotelo did attempt to present a more conservative image, in particular over issues such as Spain's proposed entry into NATO. Suárez's position on the Atlantic Alliance was ambiguous, even reluctant<sup>34</sup>, but Calvo Sotelo made it clear from the investiture debate onwards that full Spanish integration into its structures was a firm aim of his Presidency<sup>35</sup>. Similarly, Calvo Sotelo almost immediately suspended the tax authorities' publication of the lists of high earners, which had been a great source of discomfort in business circles<sup>36</sup>. It made sense for Calvo Sotelo to avoid the tense relationship with the CEOE and the banks which characterised the Suárez Presidency, and the pressures of the critics in the parliamentary group emphasised this, although, as pointed out earlier, he was

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<sup>32</sup> Interview C44. See also "Calvo Sotelo presentó un programa de gobierno que la oposición estimó marcadamente derechista", *El País*, 19 February 1981, p.11.

<sup>33</sup> Interview C34. Oscar Alzaga also recognises that Calvo Sotelo's rhetoric was much more acceptable to conservative UCD parliamentarians (interview, May 1992).

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Javier Rupérez, May 1992.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Alberto Oliart, September 1993; Calvo Sotelo, *Memoria viva de la transición*, Op.cit., pp.123-141.

<sup>36</sup> Calvo Sotelo, *Memoria viva de la transición*, Op.cit., p.163.

not particularly successful in appeasing the intransigent right.

The tensions between Calvo Sotelo and Suárez translated into organisational conflict between the UCD Government and the party apparatus. As Calvo Sotelo laments: "en 1981 y en 1982 me faltó el apoyo de un partido. (...) Lo poco que existía de (UCD), fuera del Grupo Parlamentario, no me apoyó realmente"<sup>37</sup>. However, for all the weakness of UCD's party organisation, the apparatus was a body that could not be ignored by the Government. Although for the critics, the party's decision-making structures had little legitimacy, for the officials this was not the case, and the Social Democrats and Independents in the parliamentary group would not accept the Government overriding the party Executive. The Executive was largely sympathetic to Suárez, and as a result of his departure from the Government, immediately began to play an important role:

Mientras Suárez era presidente del Gobierno, el Comité Ejecutivo era un órgano más consultivo que ejecutivo, porque en última instancia la decisión final la adoptaba Suárez. Pero cuando Suárez deja la Presidencia el Comité Ejecutivo entonces sí cobra bastante importancia y bastante vida; empieza ya a ser un órgano operante y un órgano que influye en la dirección política del partido<sup>38</sup>.

Whereas the Executive had not met as often as required by the statutes under Suárez's Presidency, under the dual presidency it was called frequently, to the extent that this was criticised by conservative sectors<sup>39</sup>. The critical minority in the Executive had little influence over its decisions, as majority votes were sufficient (unlike in the parliamentary group, where each deputy had the potential to pressurise the Government). This meant that the party's most authoritative decision-making body pulled Calvo Sotelo in the opposite direction to the conservative agenda of critical parliamentarians.

Suárez's control over the party extended to the presidency and the Secretary General, both his allies. Their statutory role in Government-parliamentary group coordination made it impossible for Calvo Sotelo to determine parliamentary strategy without Suárez's intervention, and tended to distort the real balance of power between Government and party:

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<sup>37</sup> Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.55.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>39</sup> Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún, "De la división a la desnaturalización", in Diario 16, Historia de la transición, Op.cit., pp.708-710 (p.709). The irony of this is that one of the critics' complaints before Palma was that the Executive was not called regularly.

La separación de Presidencias no funciona porque el presidente del partido se siente un líder político, es el partido gubernamental, y no puede quedar relegado a un segundo plano como la naturaleza de las ccas lleva en un país donde predomina el Gobierno<sup>40</sup>.

The President of the Government, with all the authority of that office, in fact had virtually no formal power within the party organisation. A particularly striking example of this is that the party's electoral lists, according to the statutes, were to be determined by a Commission of which the President and Secretary General of the party were automatically members, along with a further three members elected by the Executive<sup>41</sup>. This meant that in the likely event of early general elections, the President of the Government would not be in a position to control candidate selection as his predecessor had, gravely undermining his authority over the parliamentary group.

The Electoral Commission was to select candidates on the basis of short-lists drawn up by the UCD's provincial Executive Committees, and this confirmed that the process of candidate selection would be dominated by Suárez and his supporters. The majority of provincial branches were directly controlled by the central party apparatus, as had been shown in the run-up to the Palma Congress, and the apparatus itself was unambiguously supportive of Suárez and his positions. The conservative critics, although influential in the parliamentary group, controlled only a handful of provinces, and were in minority positions elsewhere. This was emphatically confirmed by the round of provincial assemblies held in June and July 1981, in which most of the party's provincial Executives were renewed. The suarista lists were successful in retaining control over the majority of provinces, and in many others so-called "listas de integración" produced Executives in which power was shared amongst the various factions present, without threatening central control (see Table 7.3.)<sup>42</sup>. The critics failed to improve their position, winning only the provinces of Guadalajara, Palencia, Valladolid, Jaén and Guipúzcoa, which they already controlled. Calvo Sotelo, apart from narrowly electing an

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>41</sup> "Estatutos de Unión de Centro Democrático", Op.cit., Article 22.3.

<sup>42</sup> See "Fernando Abril resucita el Movimiento en Valencia", Diario 16, 3 July 1981, p.5; "El aparato de UCD copa las asambleas provinciales del partido", El País, 6 July 1981, p.10; "El aparato sigue dominando en el proceso electoral de UCD", Diario 16, 6 July 1981, p.8; "Los críticos de UCD, castigados", Diario 16, 7 July 1981, p.7; "El sector crítico de UCD de Cantabria no reconocerá al nuevo comité ejecutivo", El País, 9 July 1981, p.13; "Los hombres de Abril barrieron al sector crítico en Valencia", El País, 14 July 1981. Huneus down-plays the success of the apparatus (La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.338-9).

ally, Miguel Doménech, as President of UCD-Madrid, made little impression on the process.

It should be remembered that Suárez did not have exclusive control over the provincial structure of UCD; Rodolfo Martín Villa remained an important source of authority within the UCD's provincial branches, and a number of provincial leaders were close allies of his<sup>43</sup>. However the highly centralised party apparatus was formally managed by two unambiguous suaristas, Sahagún and Calvo Ortega. Above all, the UCD provincial structure reflected neither the parliamentary weight of the critics, nor the governmental authority of Calvo Sotelo. Instead, supporters of the presidentialist project dominated the executive positions in the periphery, and this had a significant impact at national level. All UCD's 52 provincial Secretaries General were members of the party's Political Council (Consejo Político), the supreme representative body between party Congresses. This gave Suárez and the party apparatus further influence over the party's decision-making mechanisms.

These factors put Calvo Sotelo in a very difficult position in his attempts to maintain the support of both the parliamentary group and the party organisation. Part of the discontent expressed by the critical movement was directed at the vulnerable position of conservative factions in the party's provincial organisation, a vulnerability which could easily lead to their being excluded from the UCD lists at the next elections. The internal elections of July 1981 did nothing to reduce this vulnerability; if anything it increased, leaving many critical parliamentarians exposed and on the defensive within the party organisation. It followed from this that their susceptibility to party discipline was not enhanced; in particular, there was no reason to support a Government whose President was in no position to change this state of affairs. This set of circumstances meant that little had changed in terms of the organisation's willingness to allow the critical sectors dominant influence over decision-making, still less in terms of the party's ability to generate a new dominant coalition capable of distributing adequate collective incentives to these sectors. Organisational rigidities imposed a framework for internal bargaining over output which presupposed a dominant coalition which had disintegrated. The dispersal of control over zones of uncertainty, and the divergence of sub-group objectives made the rules unworkable. The suarista and Social Democrat sectors, increasingly marginalised in the parliamentary group, dominated the party apparatus and the Executive. The critical sector, marginalised in the party apparatus and under-represented in

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<sup>43</sup> See "Elecciones en UCD", El País, 8 July 1981, p.10.

the Government (partly by choice), had sufficient parliamentary weight to paralyse government legislation. This meant that the balance of power within UCD was very unstable: the high marginal value of each deputy's vote meant that control over the parliamentary zone of uncertainty shifted unpredictably, and only rarely corresponded to control over party decision-making. That the two main internal power blocs were by now pursuing diametrically opposed aims - the purity of centrism on the one hand, the representation of a conservative constituency on the other - made effective cooperation practically impossible. As Emilio Attard has claimed, "nuestra acción política circularía por dos vías distintas"<sup>44</sup>.

### 3.3. "El divorcio nos divorcia": The parliamentary group divides

The inability of the post-Palma arrangements to overcome these centrifugal pressures was demonstrated by the parliamentary progress of the controversial divorce bill. The conflict over divorce had been at the heart of the critical movement, and contributed to Suárez's resignation. The principal source of conservative anger was the behaviour of Fernández Ordóñez, appointed Minister of Justice by Suárez, and confirmed in the post by Calvo Sotelo.

Although the Social Democrats had been a key part of Suárez's Governments, and a significant number of Suárez's closest allies in the provincial organisation were Social Democrats, their numerical weakness as a faction left them exposed within the party. In particular, Fernández Ordóñez had scored badly in the internal elections held at Palma: his name received the least preference votes of any on the official list for the Executive, and 4 of the other 6 lowest scoring members of the list were fellow Social Democrats. This apparent unpopularity within the party left the faction in a vulnerable position, which was exacerbated by developments outside UCD. The centre-left strategy followed by Felipe González, and the conservative pressures on UCD to mark its ideological distances with the PSOE, made life uncomfortable for Social Democrats in UCD. Any intervention of business sectors in the internal affairs of UCD automatically implied the marginalisation of Social Democrats from the positions of influence they enjoyed in the organisation. Moreover, opinion polls suggested that UCD was heading for a crushing electoral defeat at the hands of the PSOE in coming elections. In view of their ideological and programmatic proximity to the PSOE leadership,

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<sup>44</sup> Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD. Op.cit., p.218.



and the willingness of PSOE leaders to "sign them up", the option of exit became very feasible for UCD Social Democrats, and probably the best way of maintaining their political influence.

Therefore in this case, the exit option, rather than a possibility which enhanced the faction's autonomy, became a firm intention. Most interpretations of the events surrounding the passing of the Divorce Law agree that Fernández Ordóñez used his control over the legislation in order to demonstrate his left-wing credentials and justify his move to join the PSOE, whilst conveniently aggravating the internal crisis of the PSOE's main rival. For one critic, "los socialdemócratas tenían el problema de cómo viajar al PSOE (...) y desde luego la ruptura del pacto en el tema del divorcio (...) fue la excusa que construyeron ante la opinión pública para pasarse al partido Socialista"<sup>45</sup>. Maintaining internal cohesion when a sector of the party was planning to leave was almost impossible for Calvo Sotelo, given the tight parliamentary margins in which he had to operate. The UCD Government needed the votes of Social Democrat parliamentarians, which were in turn dependent on Social Democrat representation in the Cabinet. As this faction made its continued participation conditional on the proposed divorce bill being maintained intact, a bitter conflict with the critics was difficult to avoid<sup>46</sup>.

This conflict was the result of the internal organisational dynamic of UCD after the Palma Congress, rather than any fundamental ideological incompatibility. Virtually everyone within UCD accepted that a Divorce Law was inevitable, and that it should be done in such a way as to avoid unnecessarily upsetting Catholic sensibilities. That the Social Democrats were able to present themselves as the sole defenders of such a Law in the face of reactionary opposition within the party was a function of UCD's declining autonomy with regard to an external organisation such as the Church hierarchy, and the impact this had on the party's internal cohesion.

The Divorce Bill had been carefully negotiated with Cardinal Tarancón at every stage, first by Landelino Lavilla, and then by Iñigo Cavero. That the responsibility for the Bill had always been in the hands of Tácitos or Christian Democrats indicates that Suárez took the

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<sup>45</sup> Interview C65.

<sup>46</sup> "Los socialdemócratas dejarán el Gabinete si se modifica el proyecto de ley de Divorcio", *El País*, 11 February 1981, p.11.

Church's positions seriously, and aimed to avoid alienating it. The key to this was the so-called "cláusula de dureza", which left open the possibility of judges withholding permission for divorce on a number of specified grounds. By September 1980 the Bill, which had begun the Commission stage of parliamentary scrutiny, was "pacificado": the Episcopal Conference, whilst it would publicly oppose Divorce, accepted it as a necessary evil<sup>47</sup>. Fernández Ordóñez's appointment to the Justice portfolio, seen by Tarancón as breaking the agreement, brought intense pressures on Suárez and his Government, as Ordóñez's intention was to exclude the "cláusula de dureza"<sup>48</sup>. The public offensive against the Bill launched in the run-up to the Palma Congress (in particular the Declaration of the Episcopal Conference of 3 February) not only discredited the party in the eyes of its Catholic electorate, it also made an internal compromise much more difficult, as Huneus explains:

Esta declaración complicó aún más el conflicto interno de UCD, pues situó a los democatacristianos en una situación de portavoces de la jerarquía eclesiástica (...). Esta actitud de la Iglesia, además, dejaba poco espacio de maniobra a los democatacristianos para ampliar el apoyo al interior de UCD<sup>49</sup>.

With the Social Democrats keen to emphasise their secular credentials in order to keep the door open for a move to the PSOE, and the Christian Democrats forced to follow the anti-divorce line adopted by their only source of political influence, the Episcopal Conference, the centrifugal tensions within UCD were accelerated.

External pressures created the potential for conflict, but the inadequacy of the post-Palma arrangements for party management ensured that the conflict could not be resolved through internal channels. It has been stated earlier that in the presidentialist phase the coordination between Government and parliamentary group in the legislative process had been the responsibility of the ministers involved, and of ponentes named by the minister, enabling this coordination to take place within factional boundaries. However, under Herrero's leadership, the parliamentary group began to demand collective involvement in decision-making over legislation. In the case of the Divorce Bill, Herrero called a plenary meeting of

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<sup>47</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992. See also Richard Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", *Op.cit.*, pp.477-478.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Martín Villa, September 1993.

<sup>49</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, *Op.cit.*, p.345.

the group in which the Christian Democrats attacked Ordóñez's bill and the parliamentary strategy of his ponentes Moscoso and Pelayo. In this meeting, Herrero forced a vote in which a majority of 60% of UCD deputies rejected Ordóñez's approach, demonstrating the strength of conservative positions within the parliamentary group<sup>50</sup>. In response to this, the Social Democrats, with the support of some suaristas, insisted that, in line with the party statutes, the ultimate decision should rest with the Executive Committee, where they had a clear majority. The Executive Committee decided on an ambiguous compromise, whereby the initial Cavero bill would be maintained in the Congress, but amended in the Senate, allowing both sides to save face<sup>51</sup>.

The actual outcome of the parliamentary votes made a mockery of the decisions made by both parliamentary group and Executive Committee, as a group of Social Democrats broke parliamentary discipline and twice voted with the left in the Congress in order to suppress the "cláusula de dureza"<sup>52</sup>. This fiasco essentially destroyed what remaining legitimacy the party's decision-making procedures might have had for the UCD right. The Social Democrats' refusal to abide by the decisions of the Executive Committee showed they had effectively abandoned UCD, as Fernández Ordóñez later confirmed<sup>53</sup>. The party statutes were further undermined by the fact that a number of UCD parliamentarians, including at least one minister, failed to vote in accordance with a resolution passed in the Palma Congress<sup>54</sup>. But the most striking aspect of this case is the role of the Government, and in particular its President Calvo Sotelo. He formally supported his minister, but played no part in coordinating the positions of the Government and the parliamentary group; indeed the party statutes allowed him no formal authority to do so. Calvo Sotelo's lack of a parliamentary power base, and his lack of formal power within the party (and in particular the Executive Committee), left him without legitimacy to intervene. The President of the party enjoyed the formal

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<sup>50</sup> See Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., pp.222-224; Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.259.

<sup>51</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., pp.259-60. This followed a pattern much used during the transition, whereby the parties agreed on a given outcome, and distributed the voting of certain amendments between them in order to avoid publicly adopting compromise positions; see Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.477.

<sup>52</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.345-346. For the reaction of the bishops, see "Nota sobre el matrimonio y el divorcio", in Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal Española, Op.cit., pp.622-624.

<sup>53</sup> Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, Palabras en libertad, Op.cit., p.81.

<sup>54</sup> See UCD, II Congreso Nacional de UCD. Ponencias, Palma de Mallorca, 6, 7, 8 febrero 1981, p.146.

resources of power according to the party statutes, but did not have the support within the party to use them. This in effect reproduced the situation of 1980, where Suárez refused to arbitrate over conflictual issues. The party was left without leadership, as one minister confirms:

En el caso del divorcio, dentro del partido se había debilitado la autoridad del presidente del Gobierno y del presidente del partido, y si hubieran ejercido autoridad sobre esto, pues probablemente se hubiera conseguido ese sentido de moderación. Pero la autonomía de los ministros para moverse con los proyectos de ley, eran muy grandes, y en fin no había una clara conexión o coordinación entre la política de partido y la política de Gobierno<sup>55</sup>.

Given the circumstances in which he became President, and the equivocal attitude of his main sponsor, Suárez, it is hard to blame Calvo Sotelo for failing to overcome the centrifugal tensions within the party. During the period of the dual presidency, he paid little attention to internal party matters, concentrating instead on purely governmental activity. One former minister claims that

Calvo Sotelo no intervino prácticamente en el partido. El se dedicó al Gobierno y el partido yo creo que le parecía un avispero. Casi no hubo liderazgo en el partido en ese periodo - el presidente del partido era Rodríguez Sahagún y él no funcionaba por los mismos canales que el presidente del Gobierno, sino por los canales de Suárez, o sea que allí en esos momentos había una disfuncionalidad<sup>56</sup>.

In short, a party whose internal regulations envisaged a high level of centralisation of power around its leadership, in practice suffered from an increasing dispersal of control over zones of organisational uncertainty. In a party lacking a firm consensus over its basic objectives, and in a political context in which external pressures tended to reduce the party factions' need to compromise over these objectives, the logic of fragmentation began to take hold.

#### **4. Confrontation and fragmentation: Suaristas, leopoldistas and moderados**

##### **4.1. Understanding the disintegration of UCD**

The actual process of disintegration suffered by UCD in the period between July 1981

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<sup>55</sup> Interview C34.

<sup>56</sup> Interview C36.

and September 1982 provides an opportunity to test the validity of the arguments on which this study has been based. If the conflict which brought Suárez's resignation and the polarisation of the Palma Congress can be seen as a resort to voice in the face of dissatisfaction over party output, then the rebellion and eventual departure of various sub-groups amounts to exit in response to the failure of voice to redress the party's performance. In turn, the series of electoral failures which marked this period represent the exercise of the exit option on the part of significant sectors of UCD's social base for similar reasons. This process, the prelude to the formal dissolution of the party in early 1983, must therefore be explained in terms of the strategic assessments made by party sub-groups to achieve their objectives, and the organisation's failure to accommodate the dissatisfaction both of internal participants and the party's social base.

#### 4.2. Preparing the ground for exit: The Plataforma Moderada

The failure of attempts to push Calvo Sotelo into the "mayoría natural" project led conservative sectors of the parliamentary group to consider alternative means of adapting the party's output<sup>57</sup>. Given the impossibility of forcing a change in strategy through the UCD structures, the decision was made to formalise the autonomy represented by their parliamentary presence. The Plataforma Moderada was a tendency containing 39 UCD deputies (and later 31 senators) - mostly Christian Democrats and Tácitos - who demanded a number of policy changes, such as an economic policy more favourable to business, entry into NATO and the effective subsidising of private education. This was effectively an attempt to link these deputies' continued parliamentary support to the Government adapting its policies to their demands. The joint declaration sent to the UCD President in July 1981 also insisted on the type of social linkages suggested by the critical movement before the Palma Congress:

Es preciso articular un amplio programa de acción política (...) en efectiva comunicación con los sectores sociales que en el orden familiar, económico, profesional, empresarial, cultural, laboral y cívico, componen nuestra sociedad y, en particular, con quienes nos han otorgado su confianza en las urnas. Solamente un diálogo fluido y sincero con este entramado social y nuestra progresiva inserción, cada vez más amplia, en el mismo, evitará que nuestras

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<sup>57</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.246.

decisiones se aparten de su escala de valores<sup>58</sup>.

This was a demand for what the moderados understood as the logic of constituency representation. This would "lock" UCD into representing the interests of what was perceived to be a fundamentally conservative social base, distributing appropriate benefits to the interest groups mentioned in the statement. In the short term, what the moderados hoped was that their control over zones of uncertainty - in particular the Government's reliance on their votes (their "blackmail potential") - would lead to a redefinition of the party's internal bargaining process. In Herrero's words:

Lo único que queremos es que reconozcan las corrientes de opinión y el peso específico de cada una de ellas en el partido y en el electorado. Queremos, en definitiva, (...) que se pacten los objetivos<sup>59</sup>.

This implied a coalitional form of party organisation, which failed to recognise that the moderados had been elected on a unified UCD ticket, on the basis of an agreed programme, under Adolfo Suárez's leadership.

The reaction of the party apparatus confirmed that these demands could not easily be accommodated within the existing organisational rules. On July 28 1981 the Executive Committee passed almost unanimously (only the moderados Attard and Herrero abstained) a resolution condemning the Plataforma. This resolution insisted that the formal results of the Palma Congress were the only basis for negotiation:

(El Comité Ejecutivo) lamenta el procedimiento utilizado que ha supuesto dar a la publicidad temas que por su naturaleza y efectos deben sustanciarse previamente mediante debate interno en los órganos correspondientes del partido. (...) Igualmente, no se permite la existencia de grupos o fracciones organizadas dentro del partido<sup>60</sup>.

Therefore the party's most authoritative decision-making body pulled Calvo Sotelo in the opposite direction to the conservative agenda of critical parliamentarians, who were themselves determined to achieve a level of influence over organisational output consistent

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<sup>58</sup> Plataforma Moderada's letter to the UCD President, reproduced in Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., pp.246-249 (p.248).

<sup>59</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.250.

<sup>60</sup> Reproduced in Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.238.

with their control of parliamentary votes. The party's organisational rules - through the majoritarian election of the Executive Committee - created an artificial dominant coalition, which did not in fact reflect the shifting balance of power within the party. The suarista majority in the Executive was more than sufficient to marginalise the moderados from party decision-making, but this failed to recognise that the 39 moderado deputies had the destructive power to bring the Government down, with incalculable consequences for the party's future.

The consequences of this for the maintenance of interdependency of the component groups of UCD were grave. The Plataforma Moderada, in effect, was the first step towards creating the "mayoría natural" with AP. As Alzaga had warned in May 1981:

UCD, en el estado en que se encuentra, sólo podría ir hacia arriba mediante un acto de magia (...) Habremos de postular que lo antes posible, de un lado, se modifique el derecho electoral vigente, y de otro, se pongan las bases para ampliar el espectro de una futura coalición electoral y así incluir a los hombres de Coalición Democrática<sup>61</sup>.

The UCD's weakness, and the apparent impossibility of their winning control over it within the existing organisational structures, made the exit option the most viable. This exit would involve the creation of a new political organisation in which some sectors of UCD would be integrated, along with groups outside UCD. The strategy behind the Plataforma Moderada, therefore, implied the end of the interdependency which held UCD together. The suarista and Social Democrat groups who maintained a strong influence in UCD would not be expected to join such an operation; instead CD-AP would be invited to take their place. Herrero and Fraga together planned

una compleja operación que suponía la disolución de Coalición Democrática en el grupo centrista y la incorporación de los militantes de Alianza Popular a UCD, en posición suficientemente ventajosa como para ser atractiva y, sin embargo, cuantitativamente insuficiente como para alterar el talante del centrismo (...). UCD hubiera obtenido la mayoría absoluta en el Congreso, e incluso los efectivos de Coalición Democrática hubieran superado la posible secesión de socialdemócratas y suaristas<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> Oscar Alzaga, "Reflexiones sobre una crisis política grave", Conference given at Club Siglo XXI, May 1981, reproduced in Revista de Derecho Político, 10, Verano 1981.

<sup>62</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.244.

Part of this numerically unrealistic plan<sup>63</sup> was the presentation of joint UCD-AP lists in the forthcoming regional elections in Galicia, a project strongly supported by the CEOE<sup>64</sup>, and certain to be rejected by the UCD Executive Committee. A nucleus of conservative dissidents had therefore decided that cooperation with the suaristas and Social Democrats, with an emphasis on the logic of electoral competition, did not permit them to achieve their objectives. These objectives could only be achieved through a new structure, implying that UCD should be dismantled.

The determination of moderados such as Herrero and Alzaga to force a fusion between UCD and AP made the collapse of UCD difficult to avoid; indeed this was effectively their aim. The success of this project would automatically lead to the departure of the Social Democrats and suaristas, and to the end of UCD in its existing form. The "mayoría natural" implied the dissolution of the UCD's decision-making structures, which would not have accepted such a strategy, and the loss of part of the party's territorial presence, also controlled by the suaristas. Naturally the suaristas would not give up their prominent positions in the party organisation in order to permit a fusion which would change the nature of their party. But the preservation of power positions and the maintenance of the party's centrist identity were not the only reasons for suarista opposition. They were also aware that the premises of the "mayoría natural" strategy were not supported by available electoral data, and would be unlikely to prevent a Socialist electoral victory. As Social Democrat Luis Gámir argued in a newspaper article:

Paradójicamente los auténticos intereses de los sectores conservadores de la sociedad española no pasan por una UCD más conservadora. (...) Optar por una UCD profundamente conservadora (...) es dejar un excesivo espacio político a un PSOE que está actuando con inteligencia, presentándose con enfoques más moderados<sup>65</sup>.

Gámir presented data confirming that a shift to the right would be unlikely to benefit UCD: according to the data in the FOESSA report, 45% of UCD voters' second preference was the

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<sup>63</sup> Even the loss of a mere 10 Social Democrats or suaristas would have deprived the coalition of a parliamentary majority; a much bigger exodus was almost inevitable.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p.245.

<sup>65</sup> Luis Gámir, "La tentación conservadora /1", El País, 11 September 1981, p.12.



PSOE, whereas only 27% opted for CD-AP<sup>66</sup>.

Suaristas and Social Democrats were also in a strong enough bargaining position to block the "mayoría natural". They were well-represented in the party structures, and the moderados would be reluctant to openly defy the supreme decision-making bodies - Congress, Political Council and Executive Committee - of the party on whose lists they had been elected. Moreover, their parliamentary support was just as important to Calvo Sotelo as was that of the moderados, and by bringing down the Government, they would almost certainly hasten the election of a Socialist government, precisely the objective the moderados sought to avoid. The pivotal parliamentary position of suaristas and Social Democrats made them an essential component of any government coalition, whereas the conservatives could be excluded more easily. This gave the suaristas greater autonomy than their opponents, which they hoped to use to force the conservatives into accepting the continuation of the centrist project. To this degree the opportunity structure favoured the suaristas, and along with their control over the Executive Committee and the party apparatus, encouraged them to resist the conservatives' demands.

At the same time, conservatives in UCD realised that the existing party structure made it almost impossible for them to exercise the influence over UCD's political output which their supporters in business circles were demanding. The only way for them to acquire influence over the policy agenda of the political space to the right of the PSOE was to bring to bear the support of interest groups - in particular the CEOE - in order to pressurise UCD into accepting another arrangement. They may have realised that this would be likely to alienate centre voters, but it was also a feasible long-term strategy, from their point of view, to ensure that the alternative to the PSOE was a genuine conservative party, rather than the existing UCD, with its stubborn refusal to toe the conservative line. Of course, events have shown this to be very much a long-term strategy, which has born little fruit up to the time of writing. Although this apparently unsuccessful conservative strategy can be explained in terms of cognitive failure or unavailability of data on voting behaviour, a more realistic interpretation has been proposed by Luis Gámir:

Los sectores conservadores españoles, que se encontraron algo desorientados ante los resultados electorales de 1977, están hoy mucho mejor organizados. Además, el PSOE presenta en la actualidad una imagen más moderada, y por

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<sup>66</sup> Luis Gámir, "La tentación conservadora /2", El País, 12 September 1981, p.14.

ello estiman que tienen que aceptar menos un cierto reformismo en UCD<sup>67</sup>.

According to this view, the conservatives were aware of the risks of this strategy, but felt that the consequences of failure were not so terrifying as to force them into grudging support of UCD. In essence, the problem of UCD conservatives and their fellow conspirators in the CEOE was a refusal to accept that their political positions were not supported by a majority, "natural" or otherwise, of the Spanish electorate.

The outcome of this polarisation was inevitably the collapse of UCD, since the two projects were incompatible, and neither side had sufficient resources to successfully impose a solution on the other. However each side did have sufficient strength to damage the other. Centrifugal forces in a context of interdependency meant all going down together.

#### 4.3. A new dominant coalition? Calvo Sotelo and the Liberal option

Despite the Government's weakness and Calvo Sotelo's lack of a power base, any solution to UCD's problems had to involve both. The moderados intended that the "mayoría natural" strategy should be directed by the Government and in particular its President. In his May 1981 speech, Alzaga alluded to this:

Lo ideal sería que desde la cumbre del Gobierno se hiciese un llamamiento a todos los centristas influyentes para promover un diálogo sincero y constructivo sobre la problemática política del momento con la finalidad de replantearse los términos en que hay que seguir trabajando en beneficio del país (...) y de recrear, en todo caso, una fuerza política a la altura de las necesidades del país y de las demandas de nuestro pueblo<sup>68</sup>.

Calvo Sotelo did not oblige the moderados, principally because he recognised the inaccuracy of their diagnosis of the political situation. As he explains in his memoirs, Calvo Sotelo did not believe in the "mayoría natural": "no hay mayoría (...) ni un milímetro más a la derecha de UCD"<sup>69</sup>. Moreover, the Calvo Sotelo Government could not easily survive without the

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Alzaga, "Reflexiones sobre una crisis política grave", Op.cit. See also Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.245.

<sup>69</sup> Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.101.

support of suaristas and Social Democrats, and this would be likely to be withdrawn in the event of his taking the "mayoría natural" option. To do so would also have implied going against the reiterated position of the Executive Committee that UCD was "un auténtico partido de centro, reformista y progresista"<sup>70</sup>, which would have effectively isolated the Government from the party which supported it. Herrero's complaint that "quisimos, eso sí, que Calvo Sotelo optase y en realidad optó. No entre diferentes soluciones, sino por la nada"<sup>71</sup> suggests that the critics refused to recognise these constraints.

It is also true that the Executive made governing difficult for Calvo Sotelo. The suaristas, determined to prevent him from moving towards the moderados' positions, used their influence in the Executive to restrict his room for manoeuvre, creating a kind of "gobierno en la sombra", as Attard explains:

Se producía una labor entorpecedora desde estas estructuras, bloqueando la operación de ingreso en la OTAN, la autorización de televisiones privadas, y los procesos estatutarios; la pretensión prosuarista se ejercía filtrando las decisiones importantes del Gobierno por el "cedazo" de Cedaceros, creando un enervamiento constante en el arte de gobernar, cuyo bloqueo sería también extensivo a cualquier intento de apertura o de creación de un frente amplio con nuevas incorporaciones<sup>72</sup>.

Here the critical view of party democracy is turned on its head. Attard implies that it is unreasonable that the Government should have to consult the party over strategy, or that the principal representative of the majority view in the party should have the right of veto over strategy. In fact, Calvo Sotelo had hoped to placate the party by leaving it under Suárez's control, and isolating the Government from it:

Dejar el partido en manos de Adolfo Suárez, asegurar el grupo parlamentario, defender un ámbito ejecutivo para el Gobierno, mantener al Gobierno unido pese a la debilidad congénita y a la destrucción anunciada de UCD: esas fueron mi ilusión, mi esperanza y mi ruina<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> Resolution of the UCD Executive Committee of 28 July 1981, reproduced in Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.238.

<sup>71</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.249.

<sup>72</sup> Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.244.

<sup>73</sup> Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.65.

This approach only worked for as long as Suárez and the party accepted the policy positions with which the Calvo Sotelo Government attempted to maintain the cohesion of the parliamentary group. During the initial period of successes, the problem did not arise in that consensus with the PSOE virtually eliminated the "blackmail potential" of individual UCD Deputies by ensuring broad majorities. According to Arias Salgado, this strategy was not sustainable:

Las dificultades en la acción del Gobierno son tan grandes que el partido sigue al Gobierno en la medida en que el Gobierno tenga éxito. Y las circunstancias eran tales que a veces era como pedir lo imposible. (Calvo Sotelo) no entendía que en la medida que iban a encontrar grandes dificultades iba a ser muy difícil mantener ese apoyo del partido<sup>74</sup>.

The issue of Spanish entry into NATO disconcerted Suárez, who used his position in the Executive to undermine Calvo Sotelo's position. The NATO question also pushed the PSOE, strongly opposed to entry, back into the aggressive opposition role it had played before the 23-F, thus tightening the Government's parliamentary room for manoeuvre. Calvo Sotelo was strongly committed to NATO entry, and pushed it through Parliament with AP support, recreating, albeit momentarily, the "bloque burgués"<sup>75</sup>. This unbalanced the relationship between Government and opposition, and also between Government and party.

This situation led the President to attempt to bring together a new dominant coalition to overcome the UCD's internal paralysis. Fernández Ordóñez's resignation as Minister of Justice, evidently a prelude to his exit from the party, provided the opportunity. The imminent departure of a number of Social Democrats weakened the suarista front within UCD, and Calvo Sotelo attempted to exploit this to strengthen his position through the project that became known as the "centro ampliado". This project was an alternative to the "mayoría natural" which aimed at improving UCD's relationship with business sectors and the conservative elements in the social base by integrating prestigious "independents" and emphasising the liberal credentials of UCD<sup>76</sup>. UCD would thereby consolidate its electoral

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<sup>74</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>75</sup> See for instance "UCD y AP imponen su mayoría para negar un referéndum sobre la OTAN", El País, 28 October 1981, p.1.

<sup>76</sup> See Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.243.

base and placate the CEOE without having to merge with AP. The project was supported by Liberals such as Camuñas and Merigó, and leopoldistas such as Rodríguez Inciarte<sup>77</sup>, Pérez-Llorca, Oliart and Pío Cabanillas. A key element in the project was the integration of Antonio Garrigues Walker, one of the principal backers of the critical movement, into the Government as an "independent". Garrigues had already begun to mobilise Liberal movements both inside and outside UCD, with the support of the German Fundación Neumann, in order to strengthen his bargaining position; he was also an influential figure in business and financial circles<sup>78</sup>. He was offered, and rejected, the Justice portfolio as soon as Ordóñez resigned<sup>79</sup>, and rumours abounded of him preparing to replace the Social Democrat García Díez as Vice-President for Economic Affairs<sup>80</sup>. This strategy failed as a result of a concerted offensive by suaristas and Social Democrats. Arias Salgado condemned

unas presiones externas, a veces difícilmente soportables, destinadas a desnaturalizar el partido, a fragmentarlo, a amputarle una de sus alas o a sustituirlo, destruyendo un proceso de institucionalización que tiene ya una base real por toda la geografía española. (...) Se ha puesto en marcha una operación para dinamitar UCD<sup>81</sup>.

The meeting of the Political Council at the end of September 1981 saw the heavy defeat of a conservative motion calling for a "renewal" of the party's decision-making bodies under the arbitration of Calvo Sotelo. The Council - UCD's supreme representative body between Congresses - instead approved (by 175 votes to 0, and 20 abstentions) a "documento de integración" which bound the party to its original centrist identity, confirmed the validity of its statutes, and established that all candidates on UCD electoral lists must be UCD members<sup>82</sup>.

The suaristas' influence over the UCD Executive and apparatus severely restricted

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<sup>77</sup> See the interview with Rodríguez Inciarte, "Nadie en UCD ha presentado una alternativa clara a lo que ha hecho Calvo Sotelo", El País, 10 September 1981, p.12.

<sup>78</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.357-359.

<sup>79</sup> Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.207.

<sup>80</sup> See "Los suaristas, contra la entrada de Garrigues en el Gobierno", El País, 6 September 1981, p.15.

<sup>81</sup> Rafael Arias Salgado, "La institucionalización de UCD, exigencia de la estabilidad democrática", El País, 20 September 1981, p.16; "Las reglas 'democráticas' de Garrigues Walker", El País, 9 September 1981, p.12.

<sup>82</sup> "Amplia derrota de los 'críticos' en el Consejo Político de UCD", El País, 29 September 1981, p.23.

Calvo Sotelo's room for manoeuvre in attempting to ensure himself a broad parliamentary and social base of support; in essence, they blocked any attempt to impose the "mayoría natural"-CEOE solution. Two projects aimed at providing UCD with external support failed to get past the "veto" of suaristas and Social Democrats, determined to prevent the desnaturalización of the party. At the same time the pressure on Calvo Sotelo from the moderados in the parliamentary group, and from the CEOE, was maintained. In the midst of the Garrigues crisis, Ferrer Salat made the following statement to the General Assembly of the CEOE:

Resulta preocupante la actual situación del partido del Gobierno (...) para muchos empresarios españoles que, con sus familiares y su indudable influencia social, consiguieron nutrir el elevado electorado que le concedió la victoria en las urnas en dos ocasiones. Si sus líderes, y la indudable responsabilidad del presidente de Gobierno, no consiguen superar la ilógica concepción del centro como una mezcla de ideologías dispares (...) prevemos una inevitable y próxima derrota electoral<sup>83</sup>.

The subtext of this statement was that the CEOE would ensure such a defeat if an acceptable solution to the UCD crisis was not found<sup>84</sup>. The imminence of further regional elections deepened the party's internal crisis by demonstrating the fragility of UCD's social base, and the effects on the party's support of its difficult relationship with business sectors.

#### 4.4. Exit amongst UCD voters: The erosion of the social base

The disintegration of the UCD "from above" is interpreted here as a function of the decline in the interdependency of the various sub-groups for the pursuit of their diverse objectives. But the process whereby elite participants withdrew their participation as a result of their dissatisfaction with the party's output was accelerated and reinforced by the evidence that UCD had lost much of its capacity for generating electoral support. The consequences of this will be assessed shortly. The reasons for this electoral decline must be examined in terms of the internal debate over the party's political space and social links.

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<sup>83</sup> CEOE, Discurso del Presidente a la Asamblea Electoral, 9 setiembre de 1981, CEOE, Madrid, 1981, p.21. See also "La patronal pronostica la próxima derrota electoral de UCD", El País, 10 September 1981, p.1.

<sup>84</sup> As well as intervening in matters of party organisation, the CEOE also continued to pressurise the Government on economic policy: "La patronal adopta medidas de fuerza contra el proyecto de Presupuestos Generales del Estado para 1982", El País, 1 October 1981, p.1.

UCD's viability as an "electoral machine", mobilising support through intensive campaigning at election time, but shunning a more stable relationship with its electorate through associative links, was seriously undermined in the transition period by the frequency of regional elections fought on the autonomy issue. The failure of Suárez's electoral popularity to mobilise support in these elections, and the difficulties of balancing the interests of the State apparatus and grass roots demands for autonomy, brought poor (though respectable) results in the elections to the Basque and Catalan Parliaments, and in the Andalusian referendum. But in the elections to the Galician Parliament of October 1981 the UCD vote simply collapsed. UCD was the dominant party in Galicia, polling 48.5% of the vote in the 1979 legislative elections, with its rivals way behind: the PSOE on 17.3% and AP-CD on 14%<sup>85</sup>. As such, despite its prolonged internal crisis, it was still expected to remain the biggest party, although the obtention of an absolute majority was in doubt. Instead, UCD was beaten into second place by AP, who took 30.5% of the vote to UCD's 27.8%; the PSOE remained distant with 19.6%<sup>86</sup>. The gravity of this result was not so much the loss of so many votes as the growth of AP, who suddenly began to appear a feasible alternative to UCD as the main party to the right of the Socialists.

There are a number of reasons why the Galician defeat was so spectacular. Last minute problems with candidate selection, and the generally poor performance of the UCD leaders responsible for the Xunta discredited the UCD lists<sup>87</sup>. The local popularity of Manuel Fraga, who despite not being a candidate dominated the AP campaign, was also a factor. On the other hand UCD's campaign was not helped by its national leaders' lack of popular appeal<sup>88</sup>. This demonstrated the limits of UCD's capacity for mobilisation in the absence of a "charismatic" leader. In contrast, AP benefitted from the assistance of the CEOE's networks in Galicia. The CEOE organised a high profile campaign against abstention and against the parties of the left<sup>89</sup>; however its implicit message, distributed through the networks of

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<sup>85</sup> Caciagli, Elecciones y partidos en la transición española, Op.cit., p.154.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Xosé Luis Barreiro (AP campaign manager), February 1992.

<sup>88</sup> For a thorough journalistic analysis of events in Galicia in this period, see Fernando Jáuregui, La derecha después de Fraga, Op.cit., Chap.5.

<sup>89</sup> Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.370.

business associations in Galicia, was totally supportive of AP<sup>90</sup>. Support for AP at the expense of UCD was perfectly in line with the strategy of the "mayoría natural". An attempt had been made by Herrero, Fraga and Ferrer Salat to present a joint AP-UCD list in Galicia<sup>91</sup>; UCD's rejection of this project encouraged the CEOE to force UCD into bargaining by strengthening AP. This success of this strategy indicated the extent to which the CEOE's capacity for mobilisation of the small and medium business vote, if used against UCD, could undermine its core electoral constituency.

The fragility of the UCD's electoral base, now that its more conservative elements appeared to have a viable alternative in AP, became a serious threat to the party's existence. The UCD under Suárez had taken the conservative vote for granted, on the strength of AP's exiguous electoral support in 1977 and 1979. This strategy, based on the logic of electoral competition, was tied to the peculiar dynamic of the transition period, in which UCD had acquired a kind of "monopoly position" as the party most able to guarantee peaceful political change without risks for the conservative middle classes. This monopoly position enabled UCD to challenge the PSOE for the centre vote on the grounds of its reformist credentials, a strategy which provided the party with autonomy from the most reactionary elements in Spanish society, allowing Suárez sufficient flexibility to negotiate with the left. It can be argued that this strategy was taken too far, in that the redistributive fiscal policy and progressive social legislation alienated the "captive" conservative voters, who only grudgingly gave their support, and abandoned UCD as soon as an alternative appeared. As one "loyalist" Christian Democrat explained,

Yo personalmente no era favorable a establecer una política simplemente más conservadora, sino más coherente, sin perder el electorado conservador, pero atrayéndose (...) un electorado que está más a la derecha, pero hay que procurar llevarlo hacia el centro, pero claro, sin tirar tanto que se vayan a romper las cuerdas<sup>92</sup>.

The emphasis on the centre and centre-left electorate became increasingly dangerous as the other parties adapted their strategies in the attempt to win power. The PSOE, whilst strongly attacking the failures of the UCD Government, at the same time made determined efforts to

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<sup>90</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>91</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., pp.245-246.

<sup>92</sup> Interview C36.



present itself as a centre-left, social democratic party. This strategy was very successful, as opinion polls in 1980-82 (and of course the 1982 election results) show clearly. Between April 1981 and the 1982 elections, the PSOE consolidated its position as biggest party, with support fluctuating between 24% and 30%. In the same period UCD's support failed to rise above 15%<sup>93</sup>. To this extent, it can be argued that the UCD suffered a high electoral cost - in terms of the loss of conservative votes - for no apparent (party) benefit by following a centre-left strategy. This interpretation, however, assumes that the loss of votes was principally due to disenchantment with the "progressive" nature of UCD's output. There is no hard evidence to confirm this, and it is just as valid to suggest that electoral support was lost for other reasons, such as the general appearance of division and incompetence of the party elite<sup>94</sup>.

The results of the elections to the Andalusian Parliament in May 1982 confirmed the tendency towards re-alignment of the party system suggested by the Galician elections. In 1979 UCD had taken 31.5% of the vote in Andalusia, slightly less than the PSOE (33.7%), and way ahead of AP (4.3%). The result of the regional elections saw a massive increase in the PSOE's support (to 52.6%), and the UCD's strength halved to 14.5%, with AP enjoying a corresponding improvement to 17%. Again, the CEOE launched a high profile campaign against the left, and in the framework of this campaign, backed AP against UCD<sup>95</sup>. It is impossible on the basis of the available data to establish exactly how much the CEOE's intervention in these elections determined the shift in votes to AP, but an indication can be gleaned by examining opinion poll evidence. At the time of the Galician election, the CIS polls gave UCD 16% and AP 5% at national level, and at the time of the Andalusian contest, the polls gave UCD 13% and AP 7%<sup>96</sup>. Evidently for AP to defeat UCD, a considerable mobilising effort to push undecided voters towards AP must have taken place, and it seems

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<sup>93</sup> CIS, "La evolución del voto", Op.cit., p.309.

<sup>94</sup> This is the interpretation suggested by surveys of voting behaviour at the 1982 legislative elections, which emphasised the infighting of UCD factions and poor government performance as the main reasons for voters abandoning UCD: see Richard Gunther, "El realineamiento del sistema de partidos en 1982", Op.cit. This explanation cannot, of course, be automatically extrapolated to the regional elections of 1981-82, but it does seem a reasonable assumption.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992; see also Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.370-372; Jáuregui, La derecha después de Fraga, Op.cit.

<sup>96</sup> Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, "La evolución del voto: 1979-82", Op.cit., p.309.

unlikely that the meagre resources of AP alone could have achieved this. The fundamental cause of these electoral reverses is evidently UCD's lack of a genuine core constituency, but in the context of an incipient party system with low levels of voter identification, the mediating role of the employers' organisation must have had an important impact on UCD's ability to retain electoral support in a moment of crisis. The presentation of a more conservative electoral programme<sup>97</sup>, and the centre-right orientation of the new UCD Secretariat, did nothing to stop the shift of voters from UCD to AP.

Did UCD therefore follow the wrong strategy? The support of the CEOE and other associational structures could have helped consolidate UCD's social base, at the price of a more conservative policy output. It is often argued that the best strategy in the initial stages of party development is one aimed at firmly implanting a party's core constituency, therefore providing the organisation with a stable supply of electoral support for overcoming periods of crisis. It is not clear to what extent this meant establishing a conservative social base, and to what extent UCD was in a position to follow such a strategy. By eliminating rivals to the right, UCD could have ensured the "captivity" of conservative voters, covering its right flank and avoiding situations of bilateral opposition. However, as has been seen, this would have involved UCD integrating the CEOE and other conservative organisations into its dominant coalition, binding its policy output to the pressures of generally unrepresentative social interests. Given the distribution of ideological positions amongst the Spanish electorate, this would run the risk of consolidating UCD as a minority party, as occurred to AP after 1982.

A "pure" strategy of constituency representation based on the absorption of conservative social pressure groups would certainly have made the type of transition path followed by the UCD Governments much more difficult. The "política de Estado" adopted by UCD throughout its 5 years in government met with the disapproval of the kinds of conservative forces which could have mediated between the party and its social base. Groups such as the CEOE, and the sectors of the Catholic hierarchy which became dominant towards the end of the 1970s, argued that the consolidation of the new political system could be achieved without the "concessions" to the left which Suárez's Governments had made. In this sense, closer ties with the CEOE and religious groups could have narrowed UCD's room for manoeuvre, imperilling the strategy of consensus which, for all its faults, was successful in

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<sup>97</sup> UCD, Este es el futuro de Andalucía, Madrid, 1981.

integrating the left into the new political arrangement. The "política de Estado" also implied following policies which benefitted groups which would be unlikely to vote for UCD, at the expense of the middle classes. This was possible because the UCD essentially had a "one-way" relationship with its electorate, mobilising support at elections, but failing to provide the opportunity for the social base to express grievances in between elections through open, permeable party structures. Finally, it should be mentioned that the defeats suffered by UCD in Galicia and Andalusia were exaggerated by the unpopular role UCD Governments had played in limiting the scope of these regions' Statutes of Autonomy, which implied a particularly high electoral cost in the latter case. In view of these considerations, it can be suggested that the optimal strategy for party consolidation was not easily reconcilable with the optimal strategy for the consolidation of Spanish democracy. In this sense, the collapse of UCD's electoral support, and its consequences for the organisation itself, can be interpreted as part of the "price of the transition"<sup>96</sup>.

## **5. Exit and loyalty: Desertion and collapse**

### **5.1. Exit in spite of voice: The Social Democrats**

It is a striking indication of the nature of the centrifugal pressures to which the party was subjected in this period that the first major exit of UCD parliamentarians involved the Social Democrats, a group which could hardly claim to have been marginalised from the organisation's decision-making processes. In spite of this, the departure of Fernández Ordóñez and 16 others to create the Partido de Acción Democrática (PAD) in November 1981 is the easiest to rationalise in terms of an effective strategy for the pursuit of a given set of political objectives.

The PAD was basically a splinter group which allowed Ordóñez and some of his followers to pursue their political activity inside the PSOE. The close relationship between Ordóñez and the PSOE since the creation of UCD was well known, and it is possible that the transfer was always the intention. The changes in the PSOE's ideological identity in 1979, and the moderate discourse employed by Felipe González, implied that the PSOE in government would follow fundamentally social democratic policies. To this extent there was

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<sup>96</sup> As sustained by Richard Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit.

no real incoherence with the trajectory followed within UCD, and the substitutability of collective benefits was therefore high enough to make the shift worthwhile. The move was also justifiable in terms of the uncertainties implicit in remaining within UCD. The assault of the UCD right and conservative groups outside the party made a fundamental change in political objectives away from the Social Democrat position highly probable. The vulnerability of the faction became evident in the Palma Congress, and the aims of the "mayoría natural" strategy were to eliminate the Social Democrat influence on policy definition characteristic of the Suárez Presidency. Ordóñez explained his decision in terms of the increasing difficulty in achieving Social Democrat objectives within a weakened UCD:

Nosotros creemos que el partido UCD, nacido desde una idea reformadora para cubrir estas exigencias en una posición política interclasista, ha agotado su propio proyecto. (...) Estamos convencidos de haber trabajado dentro del partido hasta el límite de nuestras fuerzas por el mantenimiento de una política de reformas reales, y estamos igualmente convencidos de que esta lucha ya es estéril en el seno del propio partido<sup>99</sup>.

This decision was encouraged by electoral data which suggested that UCD would be almost certain to lose the next legislative elections to the PSOE. In October 1981, CIS polls gave UCD only 12% of the vote, compared to the PSOE's 26%<sup>100</sup>. Even allowing for greater influence in UCD than in the PSOE, the opportunities for influence over public policy would obviously still be greater within the PSOE as the party in government. Fernández Ordóñez's subsequent role in the PSOE Governments demonstrates the viability of the strategy.

The departure of this group of Social Democrats suggests that Suárez's strategy of integrating them into the dominant coalition may, in the long term, have been counter-productive for the consolidation of the party. The emphasis on the party's reformist and "progressive" credentials required to maintain the discipline of Ordóñez's group had high costs in terms of the alienation of the conservative sub-groups and the pressures exerted by the CEOE. Neither is it clear that the presence of the Social Democrats was that important in maintaining consensus with the Socialists. The fact that the Social Democrats always had the most feasible exit option gave them considerable autonomy within the party's bargaining

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<sup>99</sup> "Documento de la salida de UCD", reproduced in Fernández Ordóñez, Palabras en libertad, Op.cit., pp.250-251.

<sup>100</sup> "La evolución del voto", Op.cit., p.309.

process, and forced a number of concessions out of the party leadership (such as Ordóñez's control over the divorce bill in 1980-81). As a result of this situation, the conservative sub-groups were pushed into internal opposition, whilst the Social Democrats ultimately left in spite of their privileged position within UCD. Of course, had the UCD governed better and the PSOE maintained its Marxist ideology, the Social Democrats would have had little option but to remain in UCD as the best strategy for achieving influence over public policy. But in a context of UCD's rivals acting coherently with the electoral opportunity structure, and the problems of democratic consolidation perceived as UCD's responsibility, maintaining the Social Democrats' participation became a costly, even fruitless, exercise. The increasing interference of the CEOE in the party's internal affairs guaranteed that the Social Democrats would have little incentive to remain in UCD.

## 5.2. Party reorganisation: Back to presidentialism?

The exit of the Social Democrats, despite figures such as Arias Salgado and García Díez choosing to remain, weakened the position of the suaristas in UCD, allowing Calvo Sotelo to address the unworkable division of party authority created by the dual presidency. The reorganisation proposed by Calvo Sotelo involved his taking over the UCD presidency in order to throw his weight behind one of the blocs into which the party was divided, in an attempt to form a dominant coalition sufficiently strong to introduce some degree of coherence into party and government activity. This return to presidentialism materialised as an attempt to revive the "centro ampliado" project.

This decision was apparently provoked by a meeting of the Executive on 2 November 1981 in which the suaristas blocked the Government's pretension to create private television channels by decree<sup>101</sup>. The relevance of this question was that RTVE could be easily controlled by the State apparatus (and by politicians such as Suárez), whereas private channels would almost certainly be controlled by business interests favourable to the "mayoría natural". The strategic project behind the proposal was effectively to move in the direction of the "mayoría natural" by making the Government more autonomous from the suaristas in the party organisation, and ensuring the support of the Plataforma Moderada. This strategy was

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<sup>101</sup> Emilio Attard, Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., pp.249-275. Also, "La televisión privada constituyó el punto clave de la ruptura entre el Gobierno y la dirección de UCD", El País, 11 November 1981, p.12.

undermined from the start by the lack of conviction with which it was carried out by Calvo Sotelo, who saw his assumption of the party leadership as the only way to sustain the Government:

En el otoño de 1981, la distancia entre el Gobierno y el partido había llegado a ser insalvable. (...) La decisión de desembarcar en UCD me costó un esfuerzo extraordinario. Mi vocación de partido era tan escasa como a principios de año, pero ya no quedaba otra alternativa al desembarco que no fuese la disolución inmediata<sup>102</sup>.

Calvo Sotelo's hand was forced by the impossibility of governing without the Plataforma Moderada, who were impatient to see the "mayoría natural" adopted. The strategic dilemma he faced has been explained by a member of his Government:

La Plataforma Moderada no es una plataforma de militantes de bases; es una plataforma donde hay parlamentarios muy importantes - si esos 39 diputados los echa del partido, pasa de tener 168 diputados a tener 130. Y ahí usted no tiene nada más que dos soluciones: o convocar nuevas elecciones o hacer un gobierno de coalición con los socialistas<sup>103</sup>.

The imminence of legislative elections - less than 18 months away - also introduced the issue of electoral lists. The events at Palma de Mallorca, the critics' disruptive behaviour in Parliament, and the reassertion of the suaristas' strength in the party's territorial structures, suggested that the critics would have difficulties in obtaining electable positions on the UCD lists. The Electoral Commission was effectively under suarista control as long as Rodríguez Sahagún remained party President, and under these circumstances the critics were unlikely to accept the discipline of an organisation which was likely to punish their lack of commitment to its declared aims<sup>104</sup>. Control over the lists would give Calvo Sotelo some authority over the critics, and the ability to guarantee their political survival within UCD in exchange for parliamentary support.

The decision taken by Calvo Sotelo was essentially to defy the pressures of the party leadership in order to save his parliamentary majority and his Government. The change in the

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<sup>102</sup> Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., pp.71-73.

<sup>103</sup> Interview C34.

<sup>104</sup> See "Pulso entre los presidentes del Gobierno y de UCD por el control del comité electoral del partido", El País, 7 November 1981, p.13.

party presidency was vehemently opposed by Suárez, who saw it as a threat to UCD's centrist identity, and the resulting internal conflict made the move a costly operation in terms of maintaining internal cohesion<sup>105</sup>. Although Calvo Sotelo was able to find sufficient support in the Executive Committee (as a result of the Social Democrats' absence and the conversion of some Independents such as Martín Villa<sup>106</sup>), Sahagún resisted resignation, forcing two meetings of the Executive to discuss the issue<sup>107</sup>. Defeat over the party presidency led Suárez to threaten departure from UCD:

Desgraciadamente, no estoy cómodo en UCD. Creo que ya no puedo continuar aquí, y lamento profundamente que la crisis interna del partido no se haya resuelto yendo a las causas, sino a los efectos. Esto lo he repetido hasta la saciedad, y no se me ha hecho caso. Por tanto, no tengo más opción que marcharme<sup>108</sup>.

That Calvo Sotelo's intention was to win over the moderados is indicated by his decision to appoint the Christian Democrat Iñigo Cavero Secretary General. In a press conference after his election, Cavero made a number of organisational proposals which should have met favour amongst the moderados:

Hay que conectar con los pequeños y medianos empresarios, con los profesores de la enseñanza no estatal, con los campesinos, con los técnicos, los profesionales y las clases medias. (...) Voy a tratar de integrar más militantes a UCD que no puramente circunstanciales, vamos a tratar de captar independientes de prestigio y para ello será necesario hacer grandes cambios en provincias<sup>109</sup>.

In line with these proposals, the party Secretariat was reorganised in such a way as to eliminate the dominant influence of the suaristas. The new Secretariat consisted of one Independent, one Social Democrat, a Liberal and six Christian Democrats (see Table 7.4.).

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<sup>105</sup> See "Se ha querido dar un golpe de mano en UCD, afirma Fernando Abril", El País, 6 November 1981, p.14.

<sup>106</sup> "Las presiones y la ausencia del grupo de Fernández Ordóñez inclinan la balanza a favor de Calvo Sotelo", El País, 11 November 1981, p.11.

<sup>107</sup> Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., pp.74-75.

<sup>108</sup> "Adolfo Suárez: 'No tengo más opción que marcharme de UCD'", El País, 19 November 1981, p.17.

<sup>109</sup> "Iñigo Cavero: 'Los votos que he recibido en blanco me van a animar aún más a trabajar por la integración de UCD'", El País, 1 December 1981, p.15.

Significantly, the Liberal - Pedro López Jiménez - who occupied the key Secretariat of Organisation was a close ally of Antonio Garrigues. This demonstrated that the objective of this reorganisation, if not to immediately create the "mayoría natural", was at least to move in the direction of a closer relationship with business sectors, integrating "independents"<sup>110</sup> into the party lists at the next elections.

These changes were naturally unacceptable to suaristas and Social Democrats, and even to Martín Villa, who had initially supported Calvo Sotelo's move to the party presidency. This was shown by the 44 blank votes in the election of the presidency in the Political Council, and the 79 blank votes in the Secretary General's election. At the same time the moderados were not won over: Herrero and Alzaga both refused to enter the Government (both were already preparing to leave UCD), and effectively scuppered Calvo Sotelo's plans. As a result the President had no option but to turn to the suaristas and Social Democrats, bringing Arias Salgado, Gámir and Rodríguez Miranda into the Cabinet (Table 7.5.)<sup>111</sup>. The moderados, if their intention was already to leave UCD, probably did not want a solution which would tie them to the suaristas. At the same time, the suaristas' price for accepting Calvo Sotelo as President was to replace Miguel Herrero with the Independent Lamo de Espinosa as parliamentary spokesman. Herrero almost certainly preferred the leadership of the parliamentary group to any other post, as it permitted him to push UCD towards the "mayoría natural" through parliamentary cooperation with AP-CD<sup>112</sup>. His removal from this position probably determined his move to AP at the end of January 1982 (along with Ricardo de la Cierva and Francisco Soler), which he explained in the following grandiose terms: "al fracasar, sin que se diera mejor alternativa, el proyecto de gran derecha, decidí ir yo hacia la derecha para engrandecerla, liberalizarla y centrarla"<sup>113</sup>. By weakening the centrist group and strengthening the CD group, Herrero hoped to force the parliamentary cooperation with AP-CD that the UCD Executive had consistently and overwhelmingly rejected.

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<sup>110</sup> The "independents" referred to here would be representatives of conservative social forces, mostly businessmen such as Garrigues Walker.

<sup>111</sup> Emilio Attard describes this Government as "un triunfo socialdemócrata-suarista-martinvillista"; Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.277. However, this was largely the result of the refusal of Attard's critical allies to join the new Cabinet.

<sup>112</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.244.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., pp.273-277.



Neither did the assumption of the party presidency by Calvo Sotelo satisfy the CEOE, who continued to push for the "mayoría natural", as Vice-President Segurado announced:

los escindidos pueden votar con UCD, y también UCD puede llegar a unos determinados acuerdos. (...) Ahora más que nunca son necesarios dichos acuerdos, para que los mejores del centro y de la derecha española se puedan enfrentar con los mejores del socialismo.<sup>114</sup>

The continued presence of suaristas and Social Democrats in the Government ensured that the CEOE would continue to withhold its support. As Calvo Sotelo explains in his memoirs, Ferrer Salat persistently demanded the resignation of García Díez, the Social Democrat Vice-President for Economic Affairs<sup>115</sup>. As has already been seen, the CEOE put all its weight behind AP in the Andalusian elections of May 1982, in spite of the alienation of the suaristas from the party leadership. This shows that most of the key actors in the critical operation had given up on UCD by 1982, and instead sought to destroy it in order to clear the way for a new conservative political force.

The removal of Sahagún was therefore a failure in protecting UCD from the assault of conservative forces, whilst alienating the suarista and Independent sectors which constituted the majority of party members. It failed particularly because no attempt was made from the presidency to provide the party with a clear political direction. In his speech to the Political Council, Calvo Sotelo had identified the major cause of the UCD crisis as its inability to establish a new set of objectives after the end of the transition process:

Hemos de poner al día nuestro mensaje ideológico, y no ciertamente para desfigurarlo por la derecha o por la izquierda, sino para llevarlo más allá de la circunstancia histórica de la transición<sup>116</sup>.

This good intention was not translated into action, as one prominent suarista explains:

En un momento determinado Calvo Sotelo pensó que se podía reconvertir a UCD en una especie de partido liberal amplio. Y evidentemente eso creó conflictos internos. Yo creo que fue un error de primera magnitud el intentar

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<sup>114</sup> "Segurado aboga por una nueva mayoría", El País, 29 January 1982, p.12.

<sup>115</sup> Calvo Sotelo, Memoria viva de la transición, Op.cit., p.170.

<sup>116</sup> Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Discurso ante el Consejo Político de Unión de Centro Democrático, Madrid, 22 noviembre 1981, UCD, Madrid, 1981.

hacerse con la presidencia del partido. Porque yo entiendo que pueda uno luchar por la presidencia del partido cuando se tiene unas ideas muy claras de lo que se quiere hacer con el partido. Pero las ideas de Calvo Sotelo sobre el partido fueron ambiguas y confusísimas, la prueba de ello es que, después de hacerse con la presidencia del partido, no sabía que debía hacer<sup>117</sup>.

A similar interpretation has been made by a Christian Democrat moderado:

La operación suya de confrontación con Sahagún era una catástrofe sin límites, porque fue echar a Agustín, no para luego presidir él el partido, sino para no presidir el partido. Había echado a Agustín porque molestaba, porque era el señor de Suárez, pero no pasó a ocuparse del partido. Los dirigentes intermedios del partido se encontraban con que el presidente del partido no recibía a nadie. Y eso fue un desastre absoluto porque el partido necesitaba dirección<sup>118</sup>.

To an extent the failure of the operation can be attributed to Calvo Sotelo's unsuitability for the responsibilities of party leadership. Whereas his "political style" in many ways could be regarded as more appropriate than Suárez's for the Presidency of the Government, the party leadership required a different approach, in particular because Suárez's image had been a major factor in mobilising party membership. According to Calvo Sotelo's Secretary General:

Calvo Sotelo nunca tuvo sobre el partido el grado de control y de mando que tuvo Suárez. A pesar de todo, como Calvo Sotelo no tenía el carisma ni el grado de influencia sobre el partido que tenía Suárez, continuaban las tensiones entre el Gobierno y el partido. Era un hombre que se le reconocía la capacidad para ser presidente del Gobierno, pero era bastante aislado, y poco popular dentro del partido<sup>119</sup>.

The return to presidentialism could not succeed where the dual presidency had failed, principally because the integration of moderados and suaristas into a common project by this time was almost impossible. The consequences for the party, however, were destructive, as it effectively pushed the party's founder into a marginal position and disorientated the party membership loyal to Suárez. This may have been part of the intention; Calvo Sotelo's lack of interest in the party led him to concentrate on holding together sufficient parliamentary

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<sup>117</sup> Interview C46.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

support to push through Spain's entry into NATO and maintain his Government for as long as possible, even at the expense of the party. As one leopoldista explains,

Los conflictos y tensiones en el Grupo Parlamentario no se reflejaban en el Consejo de ministros. (...) A partir del golpe de Estado el Gobierno gobierna pase lo que pase en el partido - el partido se está deshaciendo y sin embargo el gobierno está gobernando con mucha eficacia<sup>120</sup>.

This interpretation is supported by Alzaga: "Calvo Sotelo no creía en el partido. El creía en el Gobierno, en el poder y las correas de transmisión del Gobierno"<sup>121</sup>.

The failure of presidentialism under Calvo Sotelo was however much more than a failure of an individual leader. Instead it confirmed the impossibility of UCD generating an authoritative dominant coalition which reflected the real power resources and "blackmail potential" between the various groups, within the framework of the existing party statutes. In particular it confirmed that there was no accommodating the moderados whilst the party organisation remained fundamentally tied to the original leadership of the UCD's founder. The presidentialist project was an attempt by the UCD's first leaders to minimise the impact on the party's output of the coalitional parties integrated into the UCD lists in 1977. The organisational rules ensured that the party leader would be the principal source of party authority, and that the minority sub-groups would be constrained into accepting participation on the leader's conditions. The Governmental and electoral failures of the leader, and the increasing control over zones of uncertainty corresponding to the minority groups, made this arrangement unsustainable. The loss of Suárez's capacity for "charismatic" mobilisation, and the emergence of important external groups articulating key sectors of UCD's initial electoral base, created a new and destructive source of organisational authority, which was not reflected in the party's formal structures. With the Palma Congress's confirmation of this unsustainable distribution of party authority, a solution incorporating the marginalised critics and the pressure groups supporting them became impossible unless the party itself was dismantled.

In this context, the parliamentary group became the framework for a project to create a new political force, which would necessarily involve the dissolution of the UCD controlled by suaristas and Social Democrats, and the incorporation of the rest of its parliamentarians

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<sup>120</sup> Interview with Alberto Oliart, September 1993.

<sup>121</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

and local leaders. The justification for this was what the UCD right saw as the insulated nature of the party's territorial structures and central apparatus, and the supposedly greater representativeness of the moderados and others in the parliamentary group:

El grupo parlamentario es lo mejor de nuestro partido y (...) jamás se le ha cuidado en sus expectativas de futuro que indudablemente constituyen un condicionante grave para su asiduidad y dedicación, mientras que lo más probable será que en su circunscripción los burócratas de manguito del propio partido le estén minando el terreno, envidiosos de su protagonismo<sup>122</sup>.

The UCD right refused to accept that their links with big business and their control over around 40 votes in the Congress were not matched by control over the party organisation. The moderados in the Centrist groups were aware that their antagonistic relationship with the party apparatus could undermine their chances of being re-elected on UCD lists in 1982-83, and that the suaristas and Social Democrats would not allow them to convert the party into a satellite of pressure groups such as the CEOE. They were unwilling to subject themselves to the authority of the suarista party apparatus, and hoped instead to use their parliamentary votes as a bargaining counter in order to force a merger with AP, with CEOE backing, ensuring that the suarista UCD would not retain its "monopoly position" on the right of the Spanish party system. With Calvo Sotelo's failure to generate a new dominant coalition capable of achieving this, their interest in remaining within UCD evaporated. Unable to control UCD, or even to change it into something they could control, they set about destroying it in order to create a new political force, capable of pursuing their political objectives.

### 5.3. An exit foretold: Christian Democrats and Liberals

A group of 20 parliamentarians abandoned UCD on 20 July 1982 to form the Partido Demócrata Popular, under the leadership of Oscar Alzaga. The creation of a new party responded to a degree to the moderados' need for an autonomous power base from which to negotiate an electoral coalition, as they had no interest in remaining within UCD. The obvious

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<sup>122</sup> Emilio Attard, Report on the parliamentary group prepared for Jaime Lamo, 30 November 1981, reproduced in Vida y muerte de UCD, Op.cit., p.286-288.

strategy to achieve a high level of substitutability of benefits was to pact with AP, always ready to form coalitions with groups enjoying a degree of democratic credibility<sup>123</sup>. A party would act as a formal indication of the moderados' distinct identity as Christian Democrats, in order to prevent them being simply absorbed into a centralised party structure and losing their bargaining power.

The reasons for the moderados' dissatisfaction with UCD have already been explained. As one moderado has summarised:

Lo que le ocurrió a nuestro sector es que luego no tuvo la posibilidad de ocupar parcelas de poder en los gobiernos de UCD para poder llevar a cabo, coherentemente, el programa del partido<sup>124</sup>.

Given their inability to transform UCD's political output and objectives to their taste, the decision to take their resources elsewhere can be interpreted as a rational strategy for the optimal use of those resources. As one prominent suarista put it, "se fueron porque perdieron la batalla dentro de UCD"<sup>125</sup>. In particular, the likelihood of achieving significant levels of political influence within UCD was reduced further by the poor electoral prospects of that party. CIS polls in June and July 1982 gave UCD 10% and 12% respectively, to AP's 9% and 10%<sup>126</sup>. Given their dissatisfaction with UCD's failure to defend a conservative constituency, and AP's willingness to represent conservative interests, leaving UCD for a coalition with AP was the most intelligent strategy, electoral strength being equal. In view of the CEOE's support for a "mayoría natural" based around AP, and the mobilising potential of this support (including financial considerations), demonstrated in the Andalusian elections, Alzaga's group could reasonably expect AP to become the largest party on the right, providing the PDP with a respectable group in Parliament. If AP was likely to defeat UCD in the elections, then it made sense to strengthen AP with a broad coalition, in order to avoid the distortions of the electoral system dividing the conservative vote:

Gran parte del voto urbano, libre, moderno e informado que fue de UCD se ha trasvasado en altísima proporción a

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<sup>123</sup> See Jáuregui, La derecha después de Fraga, Op.cit.

<sup>124</sup> Interview C65.

<sup>125</sup> Interview C46.

<sup>126</sup> CIS, "La evolución del voto", Op.cit., p.309.

AP (...) Confío en que un partido popular, y quiero pensar que posiblemente también un partido liberal, aun consciente de las dificultades de una gran coalición con AP, (...) sean capaces de diseñar una ancha alianza electoral que, a la par que preserve su propia identidad, constituya una oferta de cambio sugestiva<sup>127</sup>.

In the event this calculation proved accurate, as 16 PDP deputies were elected on Coalición Popular (AP)'s lists. In the same way as the electoral deadlines of 1977 forced cooperation under Suárez's leadership, the electoral deadlines of 1982, in view of UCD's lack of electoral resources, had the opposite effect of encouraging centrifugal tendencies in the attempt to retain political influence.

This would seem to indicate that the political opportunity structure of 1982 undermined interdependency between the UCD sub-groups to such an extent that cooperation became irrational. However such a view fails to take account of the way in which the sub-groups' behaviour itself shaped this opportunity structure, as well as being shaped by it. UCD's lack of electoral support was closely related to the spectacle of internecine wrangling offered by the party in the period 1980-82, for which the sub-groups themselves were responsible. The Christian Democrats of the Plataforma Moderada, and their allies outside the UCD bear particular responsibility for this, as one of their opponents within UCD argues:

La Plataforma Moderada es una lucha por la configuración de UCD como el partido de la derecha española. (...) Alega la democracia interna como razón, pero su queja real es que UCD no está representando la derecha. Sin embargo, a diferencia de lo que decían ellos, UCD no iba en contra de los intereses de su electorado, y tampoco incumplía su programa<sup>128</sup>.

Moreover, the moderados' decision to exit rested on the assumption that AP was the best electoral vehicle for competing with the PSOE. As has been argued earlier, the data available on the Spanish electorate, and the electoral results of the 1980s, do not support the view that a right-wing formation centred around AP was the most effective way to fight the Socialists. In the long term, the emergence of a dominant party system in spite of the creation of Coalición Popular suggests that the moderados' strategy was unlikely to succeed.

The Christian Democrats did not choose the coalition with AP simply in function of

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

its greater electoral support, but because they wished to push the balance of power in the centre-right political space towards the right, in order to reduce the influence of suaristas, Social Democrats and UCD Independents. As one AP provincial leader explained in an interview with Richard Gunther,

El PDP era una operación diseñada para destruir a la UCD. Así es cómo nació el PDP, con claras intenciones de aliarse con AP. Nació con la ayuda de AP para acabar de una vez con la UCD. Fue concebido como el lugar de reunión de los desengañados con la UCD<sup>129</sup>.

Other sources confirm that this was the case, and that the behaviour of the moderados, and their subsequent exit from UCD, was a strategy backed by the external business interests which had supported the critical movement. One senior party leader has revealed:

Yo tengo indicios de que hubo unas reuniones, justamente en el seno de la CEOE, en las que más o menos, se llegó a la conclusión de que era preciso, porque no había posible reconducción de UCD, hacer lo posible para destruirla<sup>130</sup>.

The internal opposition and ultimate exit of the moderados is consistent with this interpretation, and the disappearance of UCD suggests this strategy was successful.

But the problem remains that as a means of achieving government power, the strategy of the "mayoría natural" was ultimately a dismal failure. The choice to follow this strategy can be rationalised in two, equally valid ways: As a simple cognitive failure, and as a decision to put political identity before concrete political influence. It seems likely that the Christian Democrats placed a higher value on their ability to autonomously define their political objectives than on their access to Government power. As Alzaga himself explains,

En el sector democristiano hay dos tesis: la de Landelino, que hay que quedarse al frente de UCD, y la de la mayoría, que al menos se podía constituir con coherencia un partido democristiano. Prevaleció la tesis de crear un nuevo partido. Y si no funcionaba, nos íbamos a nuestras casas<sup>131</sup>.

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<sup>129</sup> Cited in Gunther, "Leyes electorales, sistemas de partidos y élites: El caso español", Op.cit., p.98.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

<sup>131</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

The failure of this project for wholly predictable reasons suggests that in the case of the Christian Democrats, strategy was determined by the importance of ideological self-definition and voice, rather than the most appropriate structures for achieving electoral success. However, it should be noted that it was not only Alzaga and the Christian Democrats who ultimately "went home", their political adventures having finished, but also most of the membership of UCD, the vast majority of whom had no part in the critical project, and were left to watch their party disintegrate from within its parliamentary elite.

A similar interpretation can be made of the behaviour of the Liberal faction in UCD. Despite the close cooperation of Christian Democrats and Liberals at the Palma Congress, and their ideological proximity on most issues, the two groups left UCD to form separate parties. The divergence between them was opened up over the Divorce Law, where the Liberals were reluctant to defend the positions of the Episcopal Conference<sup>132</sup>. However, in the UCD internal conflict, the two factions were clearly on the same side, favouring the logic of constituency representation backed up by the support of external forces such as the CEOE and religious associations. As Alzaga has stated, "con los liberales habíamos hecho un pacto ideológico muy amplio, no teníamos problemas ideológicos, estábamos perfectamente de acuerdo en el 85% de los temas, y con los que no estábamos de acuerdo habíamos llegado a un acuerdo sobre cómo procesar el desacuerdo"<sup>133</sup>. The mobilisation of the Clubes Liberales in 1981-82 was seen as the preparation for a new Liberal Party, under the leadership of Antonio Garrigues, who would provide a "dynastic link" and the kind of financial support necessary for an election campaign<sup>134</sup>. The Liberals, who were organisationally much weaker than the Christian Democrats within UCD, joined the AP-PDP coalition as the Unión Liberal. Again, the end result of the departure of this group from UCD was as much about defending an ideological identity and a set of political objectives<sup>135</sup> as about retaining political influence. The Liberals were even less successful than the Christian Democrats in

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<sup>132</sup> Herrero, Memorias de estío, Op.cit., p.249.

<sup>133</sup> Interview with Oscar Alzaga, May 1992.

<sup>134</sup> See Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., pp.357-359.

<sup>135</sup> Eduardo Merigó left in early July 1982 claiming that "Los acuerdos tomados el pasado fin de semana por el comité ejecutivo de UCD son absolutamente lo contrario de lo que queríamos los liberales, se suprime toda posibilidad de defender una ideología"; "'Lo que ha hecho UCD es un apaño', afirma Merigó", El País, 6 July 1982, p.11.



achieving access to influence over public policy, obtaining only 6 seats in the 1982 elections.

The strategically dubious choices of these groups can be explained in terms of their elevated social and professional status (Alzaga is a good example of this, having always combined a political with a legal career), which reduced their need for collective action and afforded them the option of exit from political life without their private interests necessarily being damaged. Moreover collective action in the form of a political party was not their only means of exercising political influence. In the case of the Liberals and Christian Democrats, elite actors could decide to withdraw their participation, in spite of the absence of feasible alternatives for achieving Government power, without necessarily abandoning any hope of defending their interests. The importance of the Liberal movement in business and financial circles ensured that Liberals would still be in a position to exercise social and political influence through different forms of collective or even individual action<sup>136</sup>. The same applied, to a lesser extent, to Christian Democrats who enjoyed close contacts with the Catholic hierarchy. In a context where forms of interest articulation other than political parties were growing stronger, exit from a political party which could offer some limited influence over public policy was compensated by the availability of other means of achieving political objectives. This was an important feature in determining the departure from organised politics, or the elaboration of adventurous new projects, on the part of a number of UCD parliamentarians, as Iñigo Cavero points out:

Así como el PSOE había conseguido integrar dentro de su Grupo Parlamentario muchas personas para las que el acceso a la condición de parlamentario ha supuesto una promoción personal, social y económica muy importante, UCD tenía unos cuadros muy buenos, y había muchas personas de nivel profesional, clase media acomodada, e incluso el ser diputado suponía una pérdida de ingresos o de situación profesional. Eran hombres independientes, y estaban convencidos de que al terminar la Legislatura, dejaban la actividad política. Eso influía en que había un exceso de prepotencia<sup>137</sup>.

These kinds of elite party members could not be expected to participate under circumstances

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<sup>136</sup> See for example the newspaper articles "Liberalismo, la etiqueta seleccionada por Antonio Garrigues para formar su partido político", *El País*, 28 February 1982, p.20; "Institutos, centros patronales, cámaras y clubes, refugios de los liberales en España", *ibid.*, p.21. See also the analysis of the Liberal parliamentarians' backgrounds in Chapter 3.

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

of "coercion". Exit was always available to them, to the extent that their personal interests were unlikely to be damaged by leaving the party, and if it failed to follow acceptable objectives or offer sufficient influence over the definition of these objectives, then there was little point in participating. Certainly, this attitude could be criticised as frivolous and destructive, given the consequences of UCD's collapse for the evolution of the Spanish democratic system.

#### 5.4. Suárez and the CDS: A rational exit?

The departure of Adolfo Suárez to form the Centro Democrático y Social (CDS) on 28 July 1982 can be seen as the emblematic event of the collapse of UCD; as one ex-minister states, "lo que rompe UCD completamente es que salga su fundador Adolfo Suárez"<sup>138</sup>. The party's founder, whose image had been the basis of UCD's identity for most of its existence, abandoned the organisation after failing to win back its presidency. The CDS, with limited campaign finance and only three former UCD deputies on its lists, polled only 2.8% of the vote in the 1982 elections, winning only two seats. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Suárez's political influence would have been better conserved within UCD, particularly after the exit of much of the conservative wing of the party.

Suárez chose to leave UCD after the failure of negotiations between him, Calvo Sotelo and Landelino Lavilla, aimed at rebuilding the party leadership in time for the inevitable legislative elections. Initially, the suaristas called on their strength in the territorial structures of the party<sup>139</sup> in an attempt to elect Suárez as President in the June meeting of the Political Council<sup>140</sup>. However after the negotiations with Calvo Sotelo failed, this attempt was abandoned, and Suárez left, despite the refusal of most suaristas (including Abril and Arias Salgado) to follow him. The main reason for this decision was Calvo Sotelo's refusal to accept Suárez's assumption of the party leadership. As one UCD leader explains, "Adolfo Suárez quería ser presidente del partido con el apoyo de Calvo Sotelo y sin que Calvo Sotelo

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<sup>138</sup> Interview with Alberto Oliart, September 1993.

<sup>139</sup> Suaristas controlled around half the provincial Executive Committees.

<sup>140</sup> "Dirigentes centristas se muestran dispuestos a intentar la sustitución de Calvo Sotelo por Suárez al frente de UCD", El País, 28 May 1982, p.15.

fuese candidato a la presidencia del Gobierno (...). Suárez y Lavilla se hubieran podido entender sin ninguna dificultad. Allí había la diferencia entre Calvo Sotelo y Suárez"<sup>141</sup>. The reasons for Calvo Sotelo's refusal recall the constraints affecting his Government for the whole of his 18 months in office: the difficulties in maintaining a parliamentary majority, and the pressures of business and financial sectors<sup>142</sup>. A prominent suarista explained the circumstances of the negotiations to Richard Gunther in the following terms:

Nuestra propuesta era reconstruir el partido desde sus orígenes apelando a las bases y eliminando los liderazgos que existían, y que Suárez asumiera la presidencia del partido, y que se dedicara a soluciones del partido, y que propiciáramos la candidatura de Landelino Lavilla para presidente del Gobierno (...) Y eso no se aceptó. Suárez, en el Consejo Político que se celebró, le pidieran que fuera, y si va, gana. Pero si dimite Calvo Sotelo, obviamente ya no teníamos mayoría parlamentaria, porque la dimisión de Calvo Sotelo y la asunción del partido por Adolfo Suárez, llevaba a grandes problemas. (...) Calvo Sotelo indicó además que había sectores importantes que no tolerarían que Calvo Sotelo le entregara a Suárez el partido. Y aquello era decisivo para nosotros, porque claro, si las decisiones en un partido se toman, no en función de los intereses del partido, sino en función de intereses extra-partido (...) "<sup>143</sup>.

The pressures of the CEOE placed Calvo Sotelo in a difficult position. In order to maintain his Government he needed to avoid worsening relations with business sectors, and keep the parliamentary support of those moderados and other critics who had not already left the party. The preoccupation was not only a function of Calvo Sotelo's interest in prolonging what would certainly be his only mandate as head of the Government; the rumours and threats of military intervention which continued until after the October elections suggested that a Governmental crisis was to be avoided at all costs. In this, as in many other occasions, the pressures of the political climate meant that party interests had to be sacrificed to the general interests of the State and the democratic system.

The exit of Adolfo Suárez is also indicative of the inflexibility with which intra-party negotiations were approached at this stage of the UCD's decomposition. Suárez tied his assumption of the party leadership to a set of conditions which would be unacceptable to some sectors of the party. As an important figure in the party apparatus explains,

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<sup>141</sup> Interview C36.

<sup>142</sup> See "Calvo Sotelo invocó presiones fácticas para negarse a proponer a Adolfo Suárez como presidente de UCD", El País, 10 July 1982, p.13.

<sup>143</sup> Interview C44.

Suárez puso una condición, él estaba dispuesto a quedarse en UCD pero que se le entregara todo el poder político de UCD en sus manos. Y Calvo Sotelo no estaba dispuesto, había muchos sectores de UCD que tampoco estaban dispuestos a ello. Entonces me da la sensación en cierta medida que Suárez pudo en un momento pensar "si no es para mí, para nadie"<sup>144</sup>.

This unreasonable price for remaining in the party he founded suggests that Suárez did not in fact intend the conditions to be accepted. Like the moderados, Suárez may have decided he preferred to suffer a reduction in his potential for influence over the policy process in order to be in control of the policy objectives of his own party. This interpretation has been proposed by a party to the negotiations:

Suárez salió porque quería buscar su propia plataforma (...) quería que se le entregara el partido, que se disolvieran los órganos colegiados y que le dieran plenos poderes a él, y que él pudiese hacer y deshacer sin dar cuenta a nadie, hasta las siguientes elecciones<sup>145</sup>.

Perhaps to an even greater extent than in the case of the moderados, Suárez's decision made little sense in terms of the objective of vote maximisation, particularly since the CDS fought the elections alone, without joining any coalition. Gunther interprets this decision as a subordination of vote maximisation to other objectives:

Suárez abandonó el partido que había creado, principalmente, porque consideraba inaceptable la continuación del status quo (...). Sin una reestructuración radical del liderazgo del partido, Suárez y sus colaboradores concedían poco valor a una victoria electoral a corto plazo<sup>146</sup>.

In a new party, Suárez could be sure that he would not suffer the same restrictions on his freedom of action to which he had been subjected inside UCD. Arias Salgado has lamented the consequences of this decision:

Suárez tiene una responsabilidad muy grande en no entenderse con Calvo Sotelo y en marcharse del partido. La institucionalización del partido, la integración de sus componentes dependía mucho de su liderazgo. Pero no quiso

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<sup>144</sup> Interview C34.

<sup>145</sup> Interview C41. Cited in Gunther, "Leyes electorales, sistemas de partidos y élites", Op.cit., p.94.

<sup>146</sup> Gunther, "Leyes electorales, sistemas de partidos y élites", Op.cit., pp.92-93.

hacerlo - rompió el partido, decidió destruir el invento<sup>147</sup>.

The impact of Suárez's departure is difficult to measure precisely, because of the almost simultaneous exit of Christian Democrats and others. However, UCD's already precarious position in the opinion polls worsened between July and September 1982, from 12% to 7%<sup>148</sup>. The mobilising potential of Adolfo Suárez, in spite of the erosion of his situational charisma, was still considerable, and his popularity had always been greater than that of his party<sup>149</sup>. In particular, the exit of the party's founder was symbolic of the chaos and confusion characteristic of the interactions between sectors of the party elite at this stage of the UCD's history. As one elite interviewee has noted, "Suárez terminó en el Congreso de Palma diciendo: si yo tengo que elegir entre Adolfo Suárez y UCD elijo UCD, y a los pocos meses, lo que eligió es Adolfo Suárez con un nuevo partido"<sup>150</sup>.

The explanation of this decision must also refer to the characteristics of Suárez's leadership style. As already discussed, Suárez never really saw the party as an institution in its own right, or a legitimate constraint on his political action. UCD, for Suárez, was instead an awkward necessity for his remaining in power after the Law for Political Reform, and it is possible he had little attachment to it beyond its role in supporting his leadership. His attitude to the party was a source of frustration for Arias Salgado:

Adolfo Suárez no tiene un modelo de partido, y además se encuentra incómodo con los partidos. Su formación política tiene lugar en estructuras cerradas donde la conservación personal es lo más importante. Tiene el modelo, simplemente, de hacer un instrumento útil, al servicio de él, es un planteamiento político muy personalizado, y muy basado en su propio liderazgo carismático. El no se planteó nunca jamás controlar la organización del partido. Era una tarea que le aburría profundamente. Desde la propia consideración de su liderazgo, él pensaba que estaba muy por encima de todo eso, y que no se tenía que ocupar de esas cosas<sup>151</sup>.

Suárez's own personal failings as a political leader must form part of an explanation of the

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<sup>147</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, May 1992.

<sup>148</sup> CIS, "La evolución del voto", Op.cit., p.309.

<sup>149</sup> See Manuel Justel, "El liderazgo como factor de explicación del voto", Op.cit.

<sup>150</sup> Interview C36.

<sup>151</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

collapse of UCD at its various stages. The importance of personal characteristics, of course, indicates that the party had not proceeded very far along the path of institutionalisation. However, the UCD's organisational fragility, and Suárez's total dominance of the political context in which the party emerged, made these personal characteristics key factors in determining UCD's ability to survive its early phase of institutional weakness. Huntington argued "the institutional strength of a political party is measured, in the first instance, by its ability to survive its founder or the charismatic leader who first brings it to power"<sup>152</sup>. In the case of UCD, the inability of UCD to survive its founder was tied to the refusal of the founder to contemplate the party being dominated by others.

## **6. Electoral defeat and dissolution**

This thesis has studied party collapse from the perspective of the participation of important elite groups, whose resources were necessary for the functioning of the party as an organisation. To this extent, its aim has been to explain the disintegration of the party elite before the 1982 elections. To conclude this Chapter, a few remarks are offered on the election defeat itself and its consequences.

UCD, for all it had lost a number of its most significant elite members, still contested the October 1982 elections, under the leadership of Landelino Lavilla. The result was catastrophic: UCD polled less than 7% of the national vote, electing only 11 deputies. In other words, the remains of UCD had become an irrelevant political force. Of course, ex-members of UCD were elected on other lists. However, this did not go very far towards matching the 165 deputies the party elected in 1977, or the 168 elected two years later. The fragmentation of the UCD elite instead allowed new parliamentarians from AP-CP and particularly the PSOE to dominate the new Parliament, integrating only a handful of ex-UCD parliamentarians. The retirement from political life of a number of experienced political cadres represented a loss for the Spanish political system. Moreover, although the party's grass-roots membership remained basically loyal, the disappearance of the bulk of its parliamentary representation left the party without an elite, and the results of the elections demonstrated that the UCD social base had largely abandoned the party.

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<sup>152</sup> Huntington, Political order in changing societies, Op.cit., p.409.

In these circumstances, the party had two choices: either to attempt to fulfil a new function in the party system as a "hinge" party, or to dissolve and join other formations. This dilemma was resolved by external pressures, in a manner which appeared to reflect the nature of the party's disintegration. As one UCD leader present at the party's dissolution revealed in an interview:

Yo una reunión que tuve con altas personas de la Banca, me dijeron que si os disolvéis, no tenemos a quién cobrarle, y no va a pasar nada. Pero si pretendéis continuar, os vamos a reclamar las deudas - que eran 5000 millones de pesetas<sup>153</sup>.

The banks and business sectors, determined that the unambiguously conservative AP should be the principal representative of the political space to the right of the PSOE, were not prepared to subsidise the survival of UCD, a centre-right party which wished to retain its autonomy from conservative interest groups. Before the 1982 elections, these groups were able to contribute to the decline of the UCD as a centrist party; after these elections, they were able to make sure that the party should disappear, allowing AP to monopolise its political space. Accordingly, the UCD was formally dissolved soon after the extraordinary Congress held on 11-12 December 1982.

The banks' calculations were undermined by AP's failure to completely replace UCD as the representative of the centre-right. In the October 1982 elections, AP was only able to take around 40% of UCD's 1979 vote, according to survey data<sup>154</sup>. The PSOE, able to mobilise less conservative UCD voters through the appeal for a "voto útil", took 27% of this vote, and the CDS took a further 8%. The thesis of the "mayoría natural" was refuted by the behaviour of the former UCD electorate, unwilling to be transferred *en masse* to the clearly conservative formation led by Manuel Fraga. The same can be said of the UCD membership, disoriented by the disappearance of the party elite. According to one estimate, AP only took around 30% of ex-UCD members, whilst 15% joined the CDS, 5% the PSOE, and around 50% abandoned political activity<sup>155</sup>, a loss of political personnel that the new Spanish

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<sup>153</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

<sup>154</sup> Huneus, *La Unión de Centro Democrático*, Op.cit., p.409. See also Mario Caciagli, "España 1982: Las elecciones del cambio", Op.cit., p.107.

<sup>155</sup> Interview with Iñigo Cavero, July 1992.

democracy, with its low levels of party affiliation, could ill afford. For all the criticisms levelled at the Suárez-Arias Salgado model of party-building, some of them shared in this thesis, it should be pointed out that the loyalty of UCD grass-roots members, many of whom continued their party activity even after the formal dissolution of the organisation<sup>156</sup>, suggests that the foundations of an institutionalised political formation had been laid by 1982. As well as an indictment of the irresponsible behaviour of the various UCD faction leaders, this fact also undermines the critics' claim that the Arias Salgado model failed to capture the "afiliación y militancia socialmente más valiosa"<sup>157</sup>.

## 7. Conclusion

Whilst the short-term strategic decisions of those exiting to form new parties were driven by a political context which may have hindered cooperation, there are grounds for believing that the situation of interdependency which had allowed UCD to emerge was still largely intact. The bulk of the Spanish electorate still placed itself in the centre of the ideological spectrum, implying that the centre-right could not be represented by a conservative elite alone. Moreover, the 1977 electoral law remained in force, with its strong incentives for ideologically similar political forces to present joint lists, rather than standing alone.

That cooperation on the Spanish centre-right proved almost impossible, in spite of the constraints of the political opportunity structure, suggests the importance of institutionalisation for the creation of a stable and balanced party system. UCD factions took short-term strategic decisions on the basis of narrow interpretations of political advantage, refusing to recognise the interests they held in common. Inability to cooperate showed that despite the party's organisational evolution, the original diversity of ideological groups had stronger calls on the loyalty of members of the party elite than the UCD as a collective. UCD failed to institutionalise because it failed to provide a collective identity which could command loyalty to the sub-groups' common interests. Instead, as one elite member has suggested, "había dos

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<sup>156</sup> Interviews with Javier Rupérez, May 1992, and Iñigo Cavero, July 1992; see also Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", *Op.cit.*, p.490.

<sup>157</sup> Herrero, *Memorias de estío*, *Op.cit.*, p.180.



concepciones de partido"<sup>158</sup> - one conservative, the other centrist - and this disagreement over the party's identity hindered the development of common loyalties. This failure to identify with the party as an institution undermined cooperation, and fragmentation resulted, despite the persistence of strong elements of interdependency.

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<sup>158</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.



## **CONCLUSION: WHAT CAUSES NEW PARTIES TO COLLAPSE?**

### **1. Explaining party collapse**

This thesis has aimed at identifying the principal variables effecting party consolidation, and showing the impact of those variables on a party which failed to consolidate and institutionalise, in spite of some favourable conditions. Although by studying a "counter-example" there is the risk of taking the exception as the basis for analysis of less dramatic cases, it is believed that the variables which explain UCD's collapse can also contribute to understanding other parties' ability to survive their initial fragility. Furthermore, with due adaptation, the conceptual framework used here to analyse the collapse of a new party should be helpful in examining the causes of collapse in established parties.

### **2. Consolidation and institutionalisation: Where did UCD fail?**

The collapse of the UCD cannot be explained in the same terms as its creation. The political opportunity structure in which the various UCD sub-groups operated in 1977 made cooperation the natural outcome for rational actors seeking to maximise their political influence. Although by 1982 the situation of interdependency on which this cooperation was based had been undermined, this did not mean that a broad, centre-oriented party like UCD had become unviable. Indeed, the failures of the Spanish right after 1982 suggest that cooperation within UCD remained the most effective way for these sub-groups to pursue their aims. Whilst the construction of the party in 1977 brought benefits (albeit unequal ones) to all the groups involved, the destruction of the party in 1981-2 damaged all of them, with the possible exception of the Social Democrats. As one UCD leader explained in an interview with Richard Gunther,

Creo que dimos al mundo un ejemplo de cómo se podía hacer una transición política importante. Dimos también un ejemplo negativo de cómo un partido en el poder se puede suicidar<sup>1</sup>.

The UCD's failure to institutionalise cooperation between its component groups led to the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview C44; cited in Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit., p.431.

abandonment of what had been a largely successful political project, and a reorganisation of the centre-right political space which defied the logic of party competition in Spain. The effects of this show the importance of party consolidation to the smooth running of new democracies.

The UCD's collapse suggests a number of problems which new parties must overcome if they are to consolidate, and ultimately institutionalise. It was argued in Chapter 1 that institutionalisation involved the establishment of long-term commitments between members of an organisation, and between that organisation and its social base. These commitments help an organisation to survive difficult periods by providing durable support and participation, which is offered as an expression of loyalty to the organisation. However loyalty can only be generated over time, and the origins of an organisation are likely to be characterised by a more instrumental view of cooperation, as a source of short-term benefits. In its initial stages, a political party is likely to be perceived by participants as being "expendable", a means to achieving precise ends. A political party which is unsuccessful at achieving these ends risks losing key participants and becoming unable to function. But paradoxically, a party which quickly achieves its stated objectives can face similar risks unless it can redefine a set of objectives around which to mobilise its support base.

UCD was a victim of this paradox. A key element in its creation was that the component groups were in basic agreement over the achievement of a democratic constitution through "*ruptura pactada*". This provided for a flow of adequate collective benefits to all the groups, despite there being some disagreement over the precise content of the Constitution. Cooperation for the achievement of a shared goal induced the UCD sub-groups to present joint lists in the 1977 elections, thereby maximising the possibilities of parliamentary representation and public policy influence inherent in the political opportunity structure. A similar point can be made about the UCD electorate. Suárez went to great lengths to avoid associating his Governments with any particular social class, and his "*política de Estado*" initially succeeded in providing acceptable benefits for all sectors of the UCD's electorate, and beyond it. However, this success in mobilising wide support for government policy was tied to an exceptional situation, and the UCD's very success in overcoming this situation and laying the foundations for political normality quickly exhausted the party's initial programme.

The failure to replace or articulate<sup>2</sup> its objectives undermined UCD's support base as both key members of the party elite and many electors exercised, or threatened to exercise, the option of exit. That this option could be entertained indicates the weakness of the initial commitments generated by UCD; the interruption of the flow of benefits was regarded as sufficient reason to exit, and exit itself was perceived to have minimal costs. The organisation was "expendable". The collapse of the UCD shows the importance for new political parties of establishing firm commitments with a social base in order to cushion themselves from the effects of short-term political failure. UCD did not establish such commitments because the its component groups were unable to agree on the definition of the party's social base. By failing to establish representative commitments to clearly defined sectors of the electorate, UCD denied itself the security of a reliable "core constituency" for whom the party was not expendable, but rather a vehicle for the defence of its long-term interests. The findings presented in this thesis therefore provide further evidence of the risks involved in following strategies of electoral competition rather than constituency representation in the initial phases of a party's existence. That the party was to a degree prevented from committing itself to a specific social base by its government responsibilities supports Gunther's contention that the UCD's collapse can be seen as one of the costs of the transition<sup>3</sup>.

The collapse in UCD's electoral support was a pre-requisite for the party's disintegration and eventual dissolution. Had the party had a more committed electorate, the elite conflict and high profile desertions suffered in 1981-82 would probably not have caused the party's disappearance. However in the context of electoral vulnerability, elite conflict was disastrous, and the party's collapse can be largely explained in terms of the breakdown in cooperation between elite sub-groups. This breakdown in cooperation was a complex process which has been examined in some detail in this study; to summarise, the explanation consists of three basic elements. The first is the undoubted ideological, socio-professional and even cultural diversity of the sub-groups which came together to form UCD in 1977: there were clearly a number of differences in the political objectives pursued by Liberals, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, Regionalists and Independents. However, these differences can be overplayed, and it is not at all clear that they represented a greater threat to party

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<sup>2</sup> To use Panebianco's term; Political parties, Op.cit.

<sup>3</sup> Gunther, "El hundimiento de UCD", Op.cit.

cohesion than the divergences between Marxists, Social Democrats and liberal technocrats in the highly cohesive PSOE, or indeed the divergences in the present-day PP. Policy disagreement is an inevitable part of party political life, and there would appear to be no a priori reason why it should have brought the collapse of the UCD. If the differences appeared insurmountable in 1981-2, it was largely because the sub-groups magnified their disagreements as part of a broader conflict over the future of the party.

The second part of the explanation, which has occupied most of this study, is the type of organisational structures established within UCD to process and resolve these differences. The creation of UCD around a common objective was facilitated by the presence of an Government, and in particular a President, who sponsored that objective and held a pivotal position in the exchanges of political resources necessary to achieve it. In the constituent phase, the definition of a collective strategy was dominated by the President and his Government, and unity, when threatened, was guaranteed by leadership imposition. This balance of power was tied to an exceptional situation, and could not provide a durable basis for cooperation. However, it did condition the process of organisational implantation, which followed a pattern of penetration, and the decision-making rules established in the new party, which concentrated power around the party leader and marginalised minority positions. It also enabled UCD to mobilise electoral support independently of secondary organisations, affording it high levels of autonomy.

This form of organisational development made sense because it allowed UCD to govern without restrictive social commitments and to compete electorally with the PSOE. It did not meet with the favour of minority sub-groups, particularly the Christian Democrats and Liberals, as it anchored parliamentary influence around the UCD left, and party influence around Suárez and his allies. However there was little they could do to prevent it taking place, since their own organisational weakness made political life outside UCD an impossibility. In this sense, they could be seen as "captive" participants, with little choice but to accept leadership dictates. This situation, which I have described as one of "coercive" participation, undermined their commitment to the party, and their dissatisfaction, and reluctance to subordinate their factional identity to the organisational whole, can be detected from as early as 1977. Not only were decisions taken by the UCD leadership which these factions rejected, but more importantly the decision-making structures themselves were a source of discontent, undermining the legitimacy of the party statutes for the most

marginalised sub-groups, and producing a "sub-optimal mix" of exit and voice options.

This lukewarm commitment to UCD as a centralised, unitary party became a threat to its survival as a result of a third element, the rapid change in the political opportunity structure after 1979, which undermined the state of interdependency which bound the party sub-groups together. The end of the constituent phase of consensus brought conflict over political objectives at the same time as the centralised control of organisational resources around the party leader began to decline. Parliamentary pressure on the UCD Government, combined with political pressure from important conservative interest groups, provided the minority sub-groups with greater organisational autonomy and destabilised the processes of internal bargaining. Here the relationship between interdependency, loyalty, and party consolidation is thrown sharply into relief. Liberals and Christian Democrats in UCD were able to use exit options provided by conservative secondary organisations to push party strategy in a different direction, in accordance with their conception of what type of party UCD should be. Here a decline in interdependency combined with active disloyalty towards the party as it had been constituted halted the process of party consolidation. As one senior figure in the party has explained:

Hay una parte de las fuerzas reales de este país, que concluido el proceso estatutario en Cataluña, dice "ahora hace falta un partido de derechas como Dios manda". UCD no es un partido de la derecha, no le gusta a la derecha, por lo tanto, o logramos reconvertir a UCD en el partido de la derecha española, o abandonamos a UCD, dejamos de apoyarlo y hacemos todo lo posible para que estalle, y apoyaremos otro partido político o montaremos otro. Naturalmente que ese planteamiento era compartido por un sector dentro del partido, y entonces se produce una conexión entre una parte de UCD y la presión externa, para reconducir UCD en un partido más claramente conservador<sup>4</sup>.

Different sectors of the party had different ideas as to the role UCD should play in the Spanish political system and the social commitments it should establish, and would only express loyalty to the organisation to the extent that those ideas were respected. In this context, the operation of majoritarian decision-making rules, which required minority factions to subordinate their preferred party model to the model advocated by the party majority, undermined the legitimacy of the party structures for the UCD right. They responded by using

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with Rafael Arias Salgado, June 1992.

external pressures to attempt to overturn the party majority, and having failed, embarked on a strategy to reorganise the Spanish centre-right, a strategy which involved the deliberate destabilisation and ultimate destruction of UCD. To this extent, the conservative forces in Spain, which had failed to make a significant impact on the genesis of the new party system in 1977, capitalised on UCD's weakness to recover influence lost during the democratisation process.

Party collapse would almost certainly not have ensued had key elite participants, and powerful social interests, not decided to actively pursue the party's disintegration. However the nature of UCD's organisational development made it particularly vulnerable to these assaults. The presidentialist structures established in 1978 placed extraordinary responsibility on the shoulders of the party leader, as the principal source of organisational legitimacy; at the same time the party statutes, by enshrining a majority logic in the election of decision-making bodies, entrenched the original party leadership to such an extent that consensual renewal of the dominant coalition proved virtually impossible. Suárez, exhausted by the pressures of the transition process and overwhelmed by the extraordinary difficulties facing his Government, lost his grip on the political situation after the constituent process. The political failures this provoked, such as the Andalusian referendum or the censure motion of May 1980, demoralised the whole party, which was deprived of an effective source of party authority. Yet the impermeability of the dominant coalition to shifts in party opinion led the internal opposition to launch destructive attacks on the leadership which further weakened the party. The absence of support from secondary organisations left the UCD membership exposed to the frustrations of a disillusioned electorate, and hampered the apparatus' efforts to consolidate the party's grass-roots base.

This implies that rapid political change poses particular problems for the development of new parties, and in consequence for processes of democratisation in general. First of all, parties of government can be drawn to establish organisational structures dictated more by the requirements of exercising political power, than by the needs of an emerging democratic political party seeking to mobilise a social base. In UCD's case the stifling centralisation of party authority owed much to Suárez's need to secure room for manoeuvre in inter-party negotiations, the building block of the successful Spanish transition. Second, political change can entrench organisational practices which, whilst entirely appropriate for the exceptional situation of the transition to democracy, may become a source of structural stress in different



political circumstances. The difficulties of overturning decision-making rules institutionalised in periods of political crisis can imperil party consolidation, by hindering the emergence of an "optimal mix" of exit and voice options. Moreover, rapid political change is likely to bring about considerable variations in the exit options and control over zones of uncertainty enjoyed by elite participants, bringing unpredictable fluctuations in the levels of interdependency between them. As new parties are most likely to emerge in situations of political change, theories of party development should pay close attention to the impact of environmental instability on party consolidation.

Another feature of party development and democratisation touched upon here is the extent to which "institutional engineering" in new democracies can succeed in creating the conditions for the emergence of effective party systems. The collapse of the UCD, despite its relative success in winning and exercising power in the new political system, poses serious questions about the impact of electoral laws on party behaviour. The electoral system established in Spain had as one of its principal aims to avoid parliamentary fragmentation by introducing strong "correctives" in the proportional system which would favour a few large parties. The idea behind this was that by shaping the rules of the electoral game, political actors would respond to the incentives and constraints in those rules and cooperate to produce joint lists. However, as Richard Gunther has pointed out, the rewards inherent in this electoral opportunity structure were only available to the party or coalition as a whole<sup>5</sup>; the extent to which benefits filtered down to all participants depended on their success in generating balanced bargaining processes for drawing up lists and joint programmes. This in turn required that the balance of power between potentially cooperative groups should not fluctuate excessively, and, most importantly, that there should be broad scope for agreement over political goals. The case of the UCD shows that even in the presence of an electoral law pointing unequivocally in the direction of aggregation of political forces into cooperative structures, the difficulties involved in establishing these structures can lead to results quite different from those envisaged by the drafters of the law. This has implications not only for emerging democracies, but also for those established democracies considering or applying changes to their electoral systems.

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Gunther, "Leyes electorales, sistemas de partidos y élites: El caso español", Op.cit.

### **3. Directions for future research**

This thesis has presented two essentially contradictory arguments. On the one hand, that the component sub-groups of the UCD were brought together by an opportunity structure which created a situation of interdependency, and thus induced cooperation, and that this cooperation was ultimately undermined by the emergence of exit options for some of these groups. On the other hand, that in spite of these exit options, the situation of interdependency between these groups remained essentially intact, and that the exercising of these exit options on the part of so many elite actors was ultimately self-destructive. These findings suggest that institutionalisation cannot be explained in terms of rational political actors discovering that their diverse goals converge within stable systems of interests. Interdependency binds political actors together in the pursuit of more or less common goals, but is vulnerable to short-term changes in the availability or distribution of benefits. Institutionalisation requires a commitment to a framework of cooperative action in which political actors are capable of postponing or even abandoning private aims in favour of the shared goals agreed by the organisation. Ultimately this can only become durable when key participants identify themselves with the collectivity to the extent that exit acquires unsustainable costs.

This suggests a less rationalistic approach to explaining party collapse than that presented in this study. The distinction made in Chapter 1 separated institutionalisation, the generation of commitments of loyalty and identity to the organisation, from consolidation, the establishment of a stable framework for cooperation between potentially antagonistic groups. It was argued that in the absence of institutionalisation, collapse could occur as a result of conflict over goals, or the interruption of a flow of benefits to key participants. Party consolidation can certainly be explained in terms of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 1, and the approach used here could be applied in comparative studies of other cases of party creation and development in periods of political change. However the explanation of party collapse in established parties presents different challenges. For an established party to collapse, the commitments necessary for high levels of institutionalisation must fail. However, the concepts of interdependency, exit and voice do not appear adequate to explain such a failure. Participant loyalty is not only the result of durable frameworks for cooperative action and internal bargaining over concrete political goals; it contains a less instrumental type of participation, in which the party is less a vehicle for the defence of social interests, than an

irreplaceable feature of the identity of its social base. For a political party to become an end in itself, rather than a means to an end, it must become valued by participants for its own sake, as an expression of collective identity. Research into this kind of participation is essential not only for explaining the process of party creation and development, but also for discovering the extent to which the historic parties of Western democracies are themselves in danger of collapse.



## **TABLES**

**Table 2.1.****Who proposed the number one candidates in each province?**

Province	Candidate	Proposed by
Alava	Viana	Suárez
Albacete	Ruiz Risueño	PDP
Alicante	Zaragoza Gomis	PDP
Almería	Gómez Angulo	PDC
Avila	Alcón Sáez	Suárez
Badajoz	Sánchez de León	AREX
Barcelona	Sentís	Suárez
Palma Mallorca	Clar Garau	PP
Burgos	Reol Tejada	Martín Villa
Cáceres	Rovira Tarazona	Suárez
Cádiz	Portillo	Suárez
Castellón	Monsonís	FPDL
Ciudad Real	Camacho Zancada	PP
Córdoba	Rodríguez Alcaide	Suárez
Coruña	Meilán	PGI/Suárez
Cuenca	Martín Villaseñor	Martín Villa
Gerona	Gich	Suárez
Granada	Mayor Zaragoza	Suárez
Guadalajara	de Grandes	PDC
Huelva	Pérez Miyares	Suárez/Martín Villa
Huesca	León Buill	PP
Jaén	de Simón	Suárez/Martín Villa
León	Núñez	Martín Villa
Lérida	Sárraga	Suárez/Martín Villa
Logroño	Apóstua	PDC
Lugo	Rosón Pérez	PP

**Table 2.1. (cont.)**

Madrid	Suárez	Suárez
Málaga	de la Torre	PSD
Murcia	Esteban Mompeán	PDC/UDM
Navarra	Aizpún	PSD
Orense	Cabanillas	PP
Oviedo	Vega Escandón	PDC
Palencia	Alvarez de Miranda	PDC
Gran Canaria	Olarte	UC
Pontevedra	Moro	PP/Calvo Sotelo
Salamanca	Esperabé Arteaga	Suárez
Santander	de las Cuevas	Suárez
Tenerife	Galván Bello	PDC
Segovia	Fraile	Suárez
Sevilla	Clavero Arévalo	Suárez
Soria	Cisneros	PP/Suárez/Martín Villa
Tarragona	Sabeter	Suárez/Martín Villa
Teruel	Lasuén	FSD
Toledo	Arias Salgado	PSD
Valencia	Attard	PP
Valladolid	Sánchez Garcia	Suárez
Vizcaya	Echevarria	Suárez
Zamora	Otero Madrigal	PP
Zaragoza	Bolea Foradada	Suárez
Ceuta	Domínguez García	Suárez
Melilla	García Margallo	PP

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Source: Alfonso Osorio, Trayectoria política de un ministro de la Corona, Op.cit., p.310.

**Table 2.2****Categorisation of provincial expansion of UCD**

Province	Type of expansion
Alava	Govt.
Albacete	Negot.
Alicante	Coal.
Almería	Coal.
Avila	Govt.
Badajoz	Reg.
Barcelona	Govt.
Burgos	Govt.
Cáceres	Reg.
Cádiz	Coal.
Córdoba	Reg.
Coruña	Reg.
Cuenca	Govt.
Gerona	Govt.
Granada	Govt.
Huelva	Govt.
Huesca	Coal.
Jaén	Govt.
León	Govt.
Lérida	Govt.
Logroño	Govt.
Lugo	Govt.
Madrid	Govt. - Negot.
Málaga	Coal.
Murcia	Coal.
Navarra	Coal.



**Table 2.2 (cont.)**

Orense	Coal.
Oviedo	Coal.
Palencia	Coal.
Palma de Mallorca	Coal.
Pontevedra	Govt.
Gran Canaria	Negot.
Salamanca	Govt.
Santander	Govt.
Segovia	Govt.
Sevilla	Negot.
Tenerife	Coal.
Tarragona	Govt.
Teruel	Coal.
Valladolid	Coal.
Valencia	Coal.
Vizcaya	Govt.
Zamora	Negot.
Zaragoza	Govt.
Ceuta	Govt.
Melilla	Coal.

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**Key:**

Govt. - Direct Government intervention

Reg. - Government intervention through a regional party

Negot. - Negotiated intervention

Coal. - Coalitional domination

**Table 3.1.****Results of elections to Congress of Deputies 1977**

Party	Votes	%	Seats
UCD	6,337,288	34.16	166
PSOE	5,358,781	29.27	118
PCE	1,718,026	9.38	20
AP	1,525,028	8.33	16
PSP	816,510	4.46	6
PDC	514,647	2.81	11
UC-DCC	173,375	0.95	2
PNV	314,409	1.72	8
Others	1,549,827	8.92	3
	18,307,981	100	350

**Table 3.2.****Ideological distribution of voters of different parties**

Ideological position	PCE	PSOE	UCD	AP
1	19	3	-	-
2	26	10	-	-
3	30	31	2	-
4	12	26	3	-
5	1	9	46	12
6	-	3	11	17
7	2	1	9	23
8	-	-	5	17
9	-	-	1	15
10	-	-	1	5
Don't know	9	16	21	9
	100	100	100	100
Mean position	2.5	3.6	5.6	7.3

Source: José María Maravall, La política de la transición, Op.cit., p.45.

**Table 3.3.****Involvement with Franco regime of UCD parliamentarians by faction: Constituent legislature****Deputies**

Faction	Franco Politics	State Admin.	No involv.	Total
Independents	31	11	15	57
Partido Popular	7	3	13	23
Social Democrats	6	6	6	18
Regionalists	11	4	2	17
Tácitos	2	1	4	7
Christian Democrats	6	4	11	21
Liberals	2	6	14	22
Total	65	35	65	165

**Senators**

Faction	Franco Politics	State Admin.	No involv.	Total
Independents	30	6	7	43
Partido Popular	6	6	4	16
Social Democrats	5	3	2	10
Regionalists	6	2	2	10
Tácitos	2	-	1	3
Christian Democrats	5	3	5	13
Liberals	5	3	7	15
Total	59	23	28	110

**Table 3.4.****Economic and other interests of UCD parliamentarians: Constituent legislature****Deputies**

Faction	Church	State econ.	Priv. econ.	Total
Independents	1	8	16	57
Partido Popular	-	4	11	23
Social Democrats	-	2	4	18
Regionalists	-	4	5	17
Tácitos	7	-	3	7
Christian Democrats	21	4	10	21
Liberals	-	-	12	22
Total	29	22	61	165

**Senators**

Faction	Church	State econ.	Priv. econ.	Total
Independents	4	12	10	43
Partido Popular	-	1	2	16
Social Democrats	-	-	1	10
Regionalists	1	4	3	10
Tácitos	3	1	3	3
Christian Democrats	13	1	6	13
Liberals	1	1	6	15
Total	22	20	31	110

**Table 3.5.**

**1st UCD Government July 1977-February 1978**

<b>Vice-President for Economic Affairs:</b>	Enrique Fuentes Quintana (IND)
<b>Vice-President for Political Affairs:</b>	Fernando Abril (IND)
<b>Interior:</b>	Rodolfo Martín Villa (IND)
<b>Culture:</b>	Pío Cabanillas (PP)
<b>Justice:</b>	Landelino Lavilla (TAC)
<b>Foreign:</b>	Marcelino Oreja (TAC)
<b>Presidency:</b>	José Manuel Otero Novas (TAC)
<b>Treasury:</b>	Fernández Ordóñez (SD)
<b>Commerce:</b>	Juan Antonio García Díez (SD)
<b>Public Works:</b>	Joaquín Garrigues (LIB)
<b>Relations Cortes:</b>	Ignacio Camuñas (LIB)
<b>Regions:</b>	Manuel Clavero (REG)
<b>Health Social Security:</b>	Enrique Sánchez de León (REG)
<b>Education:</b>	Iñigo Cavero (DC)
<b>Defence:</b>	Manuel Gutiérrez Mellado (IND)
<b>Energy Industry:</b>	Alberto Oliart (IND)
<b>Agriculture:</b>	José Enrique Martínez Genique (IND)
<b>Labour:</b>	Manuel Jiménez de Parga (IND)
<b>Transport:</b>	José Lladó (IND)

**Key:**

IND - Independent

TAC - Tácito

REG - Regionalist

DC - Christian Democrat

LIB - Liberal

SD - Social Democrat

PP - Partido Popular

**Table 3.5. (cont.)**

Faction	Ministers	Deputies	% Parl. Group	% Govt.
Independents:	8	57	34.6	42.1
Partido Popular:	1	22	13.3	5.3
Social Democrats:	2	18	10.9	10.5
Regionalists	2	17	10.3	10.5
Tácitos	3	8	4.8	15.8
Christian Democrats	1	21	12.7	5.3
Liberals	2	22	13.3	10.5

**Table 3.6.**

**2nd UCD Government February 1978-April 1979**

<b>Vice-President for Defence:</b>	Manuel Gutiérrez Mellado (IND)
<b>Vice-President for Economic Affairs:</b>	Fernando Abril (IND)
<b>Foreign:</b>	Marcelino Oreja (TAC)
<b>Justice:</b>	Landelino Lavilla (TAC)
<b>Treasury:</b>	Francisco Fernández Ordóñez (SD)
<b>Interior:</b>	Rodolfo Martín Villa (IND)
<b>Education:</b>	Iñigo Cavero (DC)
<b>Commerce-Tourism:</b>	Juan Antonio García Díez (SD)
<b>Public Works:</b>	Joaquín Garrigues (LIB)
<b>Culture:</b>	Pío Cabanillas (PP)
<b>Presidency:</b>	José Manuel Otero Novas (TAC)
<b>Health:</b>	Enrique Sánchez de León (REG)
<b>Regions:</b>	Manuel Clavero (REG)
<b>Industry:</b>	Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún (IND)
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Jaime Lamo de Espinosa (IND)
<b>Labour:</b>	Rafael Calvo Ortega (IND)
<b>Transport:</b>	Salvador Sánchez Terán (TAC)
<b>Relations EEC:</b>	Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo (IND)



**Table 3.6. (cont.)**

Faction	Ministers	Deputies	% Parl. Group	% Govt.
Independents:	8	57	34.6	38.9
Partido Popular:	1	22	13.3	5.6
Social Democrats:	2	18	10.9	11.1
Regionalists	2	17	10.3	11.1
Tácitos	4	8	4.8	22.1
Christian Democrats	1	21	12.7	5.6
Liberals	1	22	13.3	5.6

**Table 4.1.**

**UCD Executive Committee elected at 1st Congress October 1978**

**Independents**

Adolfo Suárez  
Fernando Abril  
Rafael Calvo Ortega  
Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo  
Jaime Lamo de Espinosa  
Rodolfo Martín Villa  
Manuel Núñez  
Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún  
Carlos Sentís  
Jesús María de Viana

**Partido Popular/Tácitos**

Alvaro Alonso Castrillo  
José Luis Alvarez  
Pío Cabanillas  
Enrique Galavís  
Carmela García-Moreno  
Landelino Lavilla  
Marcelino Oreja  
José Manuel Otero Novas  
José Pedro Pérez-Llorca  
Salvador Sánchez-Terán

**Social Democrats**

Rafael Arias Salgado  
Francisco Fernández Ordóñez  
Luis González Seara  
Luis Gámir  
Juan Antonio García Díez

**Christian Democrats**

Fernando Alvarez de Miranda  
Oscar Alzaga  
Luis de Grandes  
Iñigo Caverio  
Javier Rupérez

**Liberals**

Ignacio Camuñas  
Antonio Fontán  
Joaquín Garrigues Walker  
Antonio Jiménez Blanco

**Regionalists**

Enrique Sánchez de León  
Manuel Clavero

**Table 4.2.****Results of elections to Congress of Deputies 1979**

Party	Votes	%	Seats
UCD	6,292,102	35.02	168
PSOE	5,477,037	30.49	121
PCE	1,940,236	10.80	23
AP	1,070,721	5.96	9
PSA	325,842	1.81	5
CiU	483,446	2.69	8
HB	172,110	0.96	3
PNV	275,292	1.53	7
Others	1,928,806	10.74	6
	17,965,592	100	350

Source: INE

**Table 4.3.****Involvement with Franco regime of UCD parliamentarians by faction: First legislature****Deputies**

Faction	Franco Politics	State Admin.	No involv.	Total
Independents	32	13	13	58
Partido Popular	6	7	13	26
Social Democrats	6	7	10	23
Regionalists	8	6	1	15
Tácitos	3	-	1	4
Christian Democrats	7	2	15	24
Liberals	1	6	11	18
Total	63	41	64	168

**Senators**

Faction	Franco Politics	State Admin.	No involv.	Total
Independents	33	8	26	67
Partido Popular	7	1	3	11
Social Democrats	4	2	3	9
Regionalists	3	1	4	8
Tácitos	-	-	1	1
Christian Democrats	6	2	9	17
Liberals	2	3	2	7
Total	55	17	48	120

**Table 4.4.****Economic and other interests of UCD parliamentarians: First legislature****Deputies**

Faction	Church	State econ.	Priv. econ.	Total
Independents	1	12	21	58
Partido Popular	-	3	7	19
Social Democrats	-	3	4	23
Regionalists	-	5	5	15
Tácitos	11	1	6	11
Christian Democrats	24	2	13	24
Liberals	1	-	10	18
Total	37	26	66	168

**Senators**

Faction	Church	State econ.	Priv. econ.	Total
Independents	7	16	27	67
Partido Popular	-	1	3	11
Social Democrats	-	-	1	9
Regionalists	1	3	2	8
Tácitos	1	-	1	1
Christian Democrats	17	3	6	17
Liberals	-	-	1	7
Total	26	23	41	120

**Table 4.5.**

**1979 Municipal elections in Andalusia**

**Involvement with Franco regime of candidates and elected councillors**

**Numbers involved in regime**

	UCD	CD	IND	PSOE	Total
Candidates	589	51	116	74	872
Councillors	398	21	79	48	573
Mayors	106	2	25	11	153
Deputies	23	-	1	4	27

**Percentage involved in regime**

	UCD	CD	IND	PSOE	Total
Candidates	6.2	3.5	3.6	-	2.4
Councillors	11.4	20.2	10.9	1.7	6.5
Mayors	37.4	50	38.2	4	20.1
Deputies	20.2	-	100	3.1	11

Candidates: 36,244 (Total) 9523 (UCD)

Councillors: 8729 (Total) 3491 (UCD)

Mayors: 761 (Total) 283 (UCD)

Deputies: 246 (Total) 114 (UCD)

Source: Márquez Cruz, Mobilidad política y lealtad partidista en Andalucía, Op.cit.

**Table 4.6.**

**1979 Municipal elections in Galicia**

**Involvement in Franco regime of candidates and elected councillors**

**Numbers involved in regime**

	UCD	CD	IND	PSOE	Total
Candidates	515	285	149	48	1044
Councillors	352	135	108	22	634

**Total numbers**

	UCD	CD	IND	PSOE	Total
Candidates	4424	3043	2606	2640	18380
Councillors	1785	613	717	440	4070
Mayors	174	*	*	*	312

Source: Márquez Cruz, "La transición local en Galicia: Continuidad en las élites políticas del franquismo y renovación en los Gobiernos locales", Op.cit.

\* Data not available

**Table 4.7.****Municipal elections of 1979 - results**

List	Votes	%
UCD	5,247,051	31.34
PSOE	4,671,971	27.90
PCE	2,139,603	12.78
AP	513,900	3.06
CiU	511,318	3.05
PNV	361,172	2.15
Independents and others	3,295,421	19.72
Total	16,740,436	100

**Elected officials**

List	Councillors	%	Mayors	%
UCD	30,192	43.3	3,974	49.4
PSOE	12,211	17.5	1,130	14.0
PCE	3,753	5.4	236	2.9
AP	2,431	3.5	203	2.5
CiU	1,759	2.5	216	2.6
PNV	1,090	1.5	137	1.7
Independents/others	17,259	26.1	2,150	26.9
Total	69,713	100	8,046	100

Source: Capó Giol, "Elecciones municipales, pero no locales", Op.cit., p.155.



## **Provincial control after 1978 Provincial Assemblies**

<b>Province</b>	<b>Secretary General</b>
Alava	Valle Justas (IND)
Albacete	Escobar Jiménez (PP)
Alicante	Díaz Alperi (LIB)
Almería	Ponce García (IND)
Avila	Ferrer Gutiérrez (IND)
Badajoz	Tovar (REG)
Barcelona	Rabadan Berinchat (IND)
Burgos	Carazo Carnicero (IND)
Cáceres	Múñoz García (IND)
Cádiz	Toscano Montes de Oca (SD)
Castellón	Lamo de Espinosa (IND)
Ciudad Real	Pérez de Rueda (IND)
Córdoba	Rodríguez Alcaide (REG)
Coruña	Marfany Oanes (REG)
Cuenca	Arahuetes (IND)
Gerona	Oriol Moncanut (IND)
Granada	Iglesias Casado (IND)
Gran Canaria	Márquez Fernández (IND)
Guadalajara	Bris Gallego (DC)
Guipúzcoa	Mayor Oreja (TAC)
Huelva	Asensio Márquez (IND)
Huesca	Calvo Rapún (IND)
Jaén	Jurado Méndez (IND)
León	Núñez Pérez (IND)

**Table 4.8. (cont.)**

Lérida	Mora Mascaró (IND)
Logroño	Rodríguez Moroy (SD)
Lugo	Rosón Pérez (IND)
Madrid	Ortíz (IND)
Málaga	García Pérez (SD)
Murcia	Martínez (IND)
Navarra	Moscoso (SD)
Orense	Atanes Romero (PP)
Oviedo	Checa Pérez (IND)
Palencia	Hervella García (DC)
Palma de Mallorca	Morales Gómez (IND)
Pontevedra	Biempica (IND)
Salamanca	Gómez-Rodulfo (SD)
Santander	Cuartas Galván (IND)
Segovia	Gila González (DC)
Sevilla	Llopart Sierra (SD)
Soria	Sáenz Díez Gándara (SD)
Tarragona	Folchi (IND)
Tenerife	Fernández Rodríguez (LIB)
Teruel	Román Alcalá (IND)
Toledo	Payo Subiza (IND)
Valencia	Pin Arboledas (PP)
Valladolid	Nogues María (IND)
Vizcaya	Guimón (DC)
Zamora	Cabezas Melillos (IND)
Zaragoza	Herréiz Muruzábal (SD)
Ceuta	Olivencia Ruíz (IND)
Melilla	Ginel Cañamate (PP)

**Table 5.1.**

**3rd UCD Government April 1979-May 1980**

<b>Vice-President for Defence:</b>	Manuel Gutiérrez Mellado (IND)
<b>Vice-President for Economic Affairs:</b>	Fernando Abril (IND)
<b>Foreign:</b>	Marcelino Oreja (TAC)
<b>Treasury:</b>	Jaime García Añoveros (REG)
<b>Justice:</b>	Iñigo Cavero (DC)
<b>Interior:</b>	Ibáñez Freire (IND)
<b>Public Works:</b>	Jesús Sancho Rof (IND)
<b>Education:</b>	José Manuel Otero Novas (TAC)
<b>Labour:</b>	Rafael Calvo Ortega (IND)
<b>Industry:</b>	Carlos Bustelo (SD)
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Jaime Lamo de Espinosa (IND)
<b>Commerce:</b>	Juan Antonio García Díez (SD)
<b>Transport:</b>	Salvador Sánchez Terán (TAC)
<b>Culture:</b>	Manuel Clavero (REG)
<b>Health:</b>	Juan Rovira Tarazona (REG)
<b>Territorial Administration:</b>	Antonio Fontán (LIB)
<b>Relations EEC:</b>	Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo (IND)
<b>Economy:</b>	José Luis Leal Maldonado (IND)
<b>Universities:</b>	Luis González Seara (SD)
<b>Presidency:</b>	José Pedro Pérez Llorca (PP)
<b>Defence:</b>	Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún (IND)
<b>Relations Cortes:</b>	Rafael Arias Salgado (SD)
<b>Without Portfolio:</b>	Joaquín Garrigues (LIB)

**Table 5.1. (cont.)**

Faction	Ministers	Deputies	% Parl. Group	% Govt.
Independents:	9	58	34.6	34.8
Partido Popular:	1	19	11.3	4.3
Social Democrats:	4	23	13.7	22
Regionalists	3	15	8.9	12.9
Tácitos	3	11	6.5	13.1
Christian Democrats	1	24	14.3	4.3
Liberals	2	18	10.7	8.6

**Table 5.2.**

**4th UCD Government May 1980-September 1980**

<b>Vice-President for Defence:</b>	Gutiérrez Mellado (IND)
<b>Vice-President for Economic Affairs:</b>	Fernando Abril (IND)
<b>Foreign:</b>	Marcelino Oreja (TAC)
<b>Treasury:</b>	Jaime García Añoveros (REG)
<b>Interior:</b>	Juan José Rosón (IND)
<b>Justice:</b>	Iñigo Cavero (DC)
<b>Public Works:</b>	Jesús Sancho Rof (IND)
<b>Education:</b>	José Manuel Otero Novas (TAC)
<b>Labour:</b>	Salvador Sánchez Terán (TAC)
<b>Industry:</b>	Ignacio Bayón (TAC)
<b>Commerce:</b>	Luis Gámir (SD)
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Jaime Lamo de Espinosa (IND)
<b>Transport:</b>	José Luis Alvarez (TAC)
<b>Culture:</b>	Ricardo de la Cierva (IND)
<b>Health:</b>	Juan Rovira Tarazona (REG)
<b>Territorial Administration:</b>	José Pedro Pérez Llorca (PP)
<b>Relations EEC:</b>	Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo (IND)
<b>Economy:</b>	José Luis Leal Maldonado (IND)
<b>Universities:</b>	Luis González Seara (SD)
<b>Presidency:</b>	Rafael Arias Salgado (SD)
<b>Defence:</b>	Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún (IND)
<b>Legislative Coordination:</b>	Juan Antonio Ortega Díaz-Ambrona (TAC)
<b>Public Administration:</b>	Sebastián Martín Retortillo (IND)

**Table 5.2. (cont.)**

Faction	Ministers	Deputies	% Parl. Group	% Govt.
Independents:	10	58	34.6	43.0
Partido Popular:	1	19	11.3	4.3
Social Democrats:	3	23	13.7	12.9
Regionalists	2	15	8.9	8.6
Tácitos	6	11	6.5	25.8
Christian Democrats	1	24	14.3	4.3
Liberals	0	18	10.7	0

**Table 5.3.**

**5th UCD Government September 1980-February 1981**

<b>Vice-President for Defence:</b>	Manuel Gutiérrez Mellado (IND)
<b>Vice-President for Economic Affairs:</b>	Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo (IND)
<b>Foreign:</b>	José Pedro Pérez Llorca (PP)
<b>Treasury:</b>	Jaime García Añoveros (REG)
<b>Justice:</b>	Francisco Fernández Ordóñez (SD)
<b>Interior:</b>	Juan José Rosón (IND)
<b>Public Works:</b>	Jesús Sancho Rof (IND)
<b>Education:</b>	Juan Antonio Ortega Díaz-Ambrona (TAC)
<b>Labour:</b>	Félix Pérez Miyares (INDEP)
<b>Industry:</b>	Ignacio Bayón (TAC)
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Jaime Lamo de Espinosa (IND)
<b>Transport:</b>	José Luis Alvarez (TAC)
<b>Culture:</b>	Iñigo Cavero (DC)
<b>Health:</b>	Alberto Oliart (IND)
<b>Territorial Administration:</b>	Rodolfo Martín Villa (IND)
<b>Economy/Commerce:</b>	Juan Antonio García Díez (SD)
<b>Relations EEC:</b>	Eduardo Punset (LIB)
<b>Universities:</b>	Luis González Seara (SD)
<b>Presidency:</b>	Rafael Arias Salgado (SD)
<b>Defence:</b>	Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún (IND)
<b>Without Portfolio:</b>	Pío Cabanillas (PP)
<b>Public Administration:</b>	Sebastián Martín Retortillo (IND)

**Table 5.3. (cont.)**

Faction	Ministers	Deputies	% Parl. Group	% Govt.
Independents:	10	58	34.6	45
Partido Popular:	2	19	11.3	9
Social Democrats:	4	23	13.7	18
Regionalists	1	15	8.9	4.5
Tácitos	3	11	6.5	13.5
Christian Democrats	1	24	14.3	4.5
Liberals	1	18	10.7	4.5



**Table 6.1.****Involvement with Franco regime of "officials" at the 2nd UCD Congress (\*)**

Faction	Franco Politics	State Admin.	No involv.	Total
Independents	15	2	7	24
Partido Popular	3	2	1	6
Social Democrats	7	5	4	16
Regionalists	3	2	1	6
Tácitos	-	-	1	1
Christian Democrats	-	-	3	3
Liberals	-	-	2	2
Total	28	11	19	58

**Involvement with Franco regime of "critics" at the 2nd UCD Congress (\*)**

Faction	Franco Politics	State Admin.	No involv.	Total
Independents	20	4	14	38
Partido Popular	5	2	7	14
Social Democrats	3	1	3	7
Regionalists	2	1	1	4
Tácitos	4	1	3	8
Christian Democrats	6	3	19	28
Liberals	3	7	9	19
Total	43	19	56	118

**Table 6.1. (cont.)****Involvement with Franco regime of "timeservers" at the 2nd UCD Congress (\*)**

Faction	Franco Politics	State Admin.	No involv.	Total
Independents	28	15	20	63
Partido Popular	3	3	4	10
Social Democrats	1	3	5	9
Regionalists	7	4	1	12
Tácitos	1	-	2	3
Christian Democrats	7	1	2	10
Liberals	-	1	2	3
Total	47	27	36	110

\* Only parliamentarians

**Table 6.2.****Factional representation in Government: Constituent legislature**

Faction	% Parliamentary	% Governments	
	Group	July 1977	February 1978
Independents	33.9	42	38.9
Soc.Democ.	10.9	10.5	11.1
Regionalists	10.3	10.5	11.1
P.Popular	18.7	21.5	27.9
(Officials:	10.9	5.7	5.5)
(Critics:	7.8	15.8	22.4)
Christian Democrats	12.7	5.5	5.5
Liberals	13.3	10.5	5.5

**Table 6.2. (cont.)****Factional representation in Government: First legislature**

Faction	% Parliamentary	% Governments		
	Group	April 1979	May 1980	Sept. 1980
Independents	35.1	39.1	47.8	50
Social Democrats	13.7	17.4	13	18.2
Regionalists	8.3	13	8.7	4.5
Partido Popular/Tácitos	17.8	17.4	26.2	18.2
(Officials:	7.7	4.3	4.3	9.1)
(Critics:	10.1	13	21.9	9.1)
Christian Democrats	14.3	4.3	4.3	4.5
Liberals	10.7	8.7	0	4.5

**Table 6.3.****The distribution of power positions between officials and critics (\*)**

Posts	Officials	Critics	Timeservers
Deputies (Party posts)	49	61	53
Prov. Secretary General	10	15	12
Political Council	19	20	11
Executive Committee (Institutions)	19	10	5
Regional Government	8	7	15
Parliamentary posts	9	17	6
Subsecretariats, Dir.s Gen	5	4	6
Ministries	17	7	8

**Table 6.3. (cont.)****The distribution of power positions between officials + timeservers and critics**

Post	Officials + Timeservers	Critics
Deputies	112	51
(Party posts)		
Provincial Sec.Gen	22	15
Political Council	30	20
Executive Committee	24	10
(Institutions)		
Regional government	23	7
Parliamentary posts	15	17
Subsecretariats, Dir.s General	11	4
Ministries	25	7

\* Deputies only

**Table 6.4.**

**Results of elections at Palma Congress**

Lists	<u>Conference Chair</u>		<u>Executive Committee</u>		<u>Political Council</u>	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Officials	1208	64.2	1139	60.7	1138	61.2
Critics	673	35.8	737	39.3	722	38.8
Total	1881	100	1876	100	1860	100

Source: Huneus, La Unión de Centro Democrático, Op.cit., p.329.

**Table 7.1.**

**6th UCD Government February 1981-December 1981 (Presidency of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo)**

<b>Presidency:</b>	Pío Cabanillas (PP)
<b>Foreign:</b>	José Pedro Pérez Llorca (PP)
<b>Justice:</b>	Francisco Fernández Ordóñez (SD)
<b>Defence:</b>	Alberto Oliart (IND)
<b>Interior:</b>	Juan José Rosón (IND)
<b>Treasury:</b>	Jaime García Añoveros (REG)
<b>Industry:</b>	Ignacio Bayón (TAC)
<b>Economy:</b>	Juan Antonio García Díez (SD)
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Jaime Lamo de Espinosa (IND)
<b>Labour/Health:</b>	Jesús Sancho Rof (IND)
<b>Education:</b>	Juan Antonio Ortega Díaz-Ambrona (TAC)
<b>Public Works:</b>	Luis Ortíz (IND)
<b>Culture:</b>	Iñigo Cavero (DC)
<b>Transport:</b>	José Luis Alvarez (TAC)
<b>Territorial Administration:</b>	Rodolfo Martín Villa (IND)



**Table 7.1. (cont.)**

Faction	Ministers	Deputies	% Parl. Group	% Govt.
Independents:	6	58	34.6	40
Partido Popular:	2	19	11.3	13.3
Social Democrats:	2	23	13.7	13.3
Regionalists	1	15	8.9	6.7
Tácitos	3	11	6.5	20
Christian Democrats	1	24	14.3	6.7
Liberals	0	18	10.7	0

**Table 7.2.**

**Executive Committee elected at 2nd UCD Congress**

<b>Independents</b>	<b>Social Democrats</b>
Fernando Abril	Rafael Arias Salgado
Gabriel Cisneros	Francisco Fernández Ordóñez
Justo de las Cuevas	Luis Gámir
Jaime Lamo de Espinosa	Juan Antonio García Díez
Martín Villa	Luis González Seara
Martínez Meseguer	
Manuel Núñez Pérez	Partido Popular/Tácitos
Juan José Rosón	
Juan Manuel Reol Tejada	Jerónimo Alberti
Adolfo Suárez	Vicente Alvarez Pedreira
Jesús Sancho Rof	Emilio Attard
Manuel de Sárraga	Pío Cabanillas
Jesús Viana	Blas Camacho
	Carmelo García Moreno
<b>Regionalists</b>	Landelino Lavilla
Jaime García Añoveros	Jaime Mayor Oreja
Lorenzo Olarte Cullén	José Pedro Pérez Llorca
Féliz Pérez Miyares	
Cecilio Valverde	<b>Liberals</b>
	Soledad Becerril
<b>Christian Democrats</b>	Antonio Jiménez Blanco
Antón Cañellas	Joaquín Satrústegui
Iñigo Cavero	
Javier Rupérez	

**Table 7.3.****Provincial Assemblies July 1981**

Province	Secretary General	Allegiance
Alava	Viana	apparatus
Albacete	Salvador Motos	apparatus
Alicante	Gámir	apparatus
Avila	Dorrego	apparatus
Badajoz	Sánchez León	apparatus
Burgos	Reol Tejada	apparatus
Cádiz	García Díez	apparatus
Cáceres	Yuste	apparatus
Coruña	Meilán	critic
Córdoba	Valverde	apparatus
Ciudad Real	Blas Camacho	apparatus
Castellón	Tarancón	apparatus
Cuenca	Martínez Villaseñor	apparatus
Granada	Sánchez Faba	apparatus
Guadalajara	de Grandes	critic
Guipúzcoa	Mayor Oreja	critic
Huesca	Buill	apparatus
Huelva	Márquez	apparatus
Jaén	Lavilla	critic
León	Martín Villa	apparatus
Logroño	Rodríguez	apparatus
Lugo	Rosón	apparatus
Madrid	Domenech	Calvo Sotelo
Málaga	Merino	apparatus
Navarra	del Burgo	critic

**Table 7.3. (cont.)**

Oviedo	García Pumariño	apparatus
Orense	Cabanillas	apparatus
Palencia	Alvarez de Miranda	critic
Gran Canaria	Olarte Cullén	apparatus
Pontevedra	Sancho Rof	apparatus
Salamanca	Sánchez Terán	critic
Santander	Cuartas Galván	apparatus
Sevilla	García Añoveros	apparatus
Segovia	Nieves Borrego	apparatus
Soria	Cisneros	critic/Martín Villa
Teruel	Román Alcalá	apparatus
Tenerife	Galván Bello	critic
Toledo	Arias Salgado	apparatus
Valencia	Abril	apparatus
Valladolid	Camuñas	critic
Vizcaya	Cereaga	apparatus
Zamora	Ortíz	Calvo Sotelo
Zaragoza	Castellanos	apparatus
Ceuta	Rodríguez	apparatus

**Table 7.4.**

**UCD Secretariat appointed January 1982**

<b>Organisation:</b>	Pedro López Jiménez (LIB)
<b>Economic relations:</b>	Rafael García Palencia (DC)
<b>Electoral Action:</b>	Jaime Mayor Oreja (TAC)
<b>Studies and Programmes:</b>	Juan Antonio Ortega Díaz-Ambrona (TAC)
<b>Territorial policy:</b>	Juan Manuel Reol (IND)
<b>Foreign relations:</b>	Javier Rupérez (DC)
<b>Social Action and Emigration:</b>	Juan Ignacio Sáenz Díez Gándara (SD)
<b>Training and education:</b>	Eugenio Nasarre (DC)
<b>Culture and sport:</b>	Miguel Angel Arroyo (DC)

Source:

"Los miembros del grupo democristiano son mayoritarios en el nuevo secretariado de UCD",  
El País, 15 January 1982, p.13.

**Table 7.5.**

**7th UCD Government December 1981-July 1982 (Presidency of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo)**

<b>Vice-President for Political Affairs:</b>	Rodolfo Martín Villa (IND)
<b>Vice-President for Economic Affairs:</b>	Juan Antonio García Díez (SD)
<b>Without portfolio:</b>	Jaime Lamo de Espinosa (IND)
<b>Presidency:</b>	Mateo Rodríguez Inciarte (IND)
<b>Foreign:</b>	José Pedro Pérez Llorca (PP)
<b>Defence:</b>	Alberto Oliart (IND)
<b>Interior:</b>	Juan José Rosón (IND)
<b>Treasury:</b>	Jaime García Añoveros (REG)
<b>Justice:</b>	Pío Cabanillas (PP)
<b>Public Works:</b>	Luis Ortíz (IND)
<b>Territorial Administration:</b>	Rafael Arias Salgado (SD)
<b>Agriculture:</b>	José Luis Alvarez (TAC)
<b>Education:</b>	Federico Mayor Zaragoza (IND)
<b>Industry:</b>	Ignacio Bayón (TAC)
<b>Culture:</b>	Soledad Becerril (LIB)
<b>Social Security:</b>	Santiago Rodríguez Miranda (SD)
<b>Health:</b>	Manuel Núñez Pérez (IND)
<b>Transport:</b>	Luis Gámir (SD)

**Table 7.5. (cont.)**

Faction	Ministers	Deputies	% Parl. Group	% Govt.
Independents:	8	58	34.6	44.6
Partido Popular:	2	19	11.3	11.1
Social Democrats:	4	23	13.7	22.2
Regionalists	1	15	8.9	5.5
Tácitos	2	11	6.5	11.1
Christian Democrats	0	24	14.3	0
Liberals	1	18	10.7	5.5

**Table 6.5.****Relationship between organisational development and level of dissidence**

Province	Type of expansion	Prov. Control 1978	Number of critics	
			Activists	Parliamentarians
Alava	Govt.	Ind	-	1
Barcelona	Govt.	Ind	3	-
Vizcaya	Govt.	DC	5	1
Ceuta	Govt.	Ind	-	1
Gerona	Govt.	Ind	-	1
Huelva	Govt.	Ind	-	-
Jaén	Govt.	Ind	9	2
Lérida	Govt.	Ind	1	1
Lugo	Govt.	Ind	-	3
Pontevedra	Govt.	Ind	-	1
Segovia	Govt.	DC	-	2
Tarragona	Govt.	Ind	-	2
León	Govt.	Ind	-	1
Burgos	Govt.	Ind	-	-
Cuenca	Govt.	Ind	-	3
Avila	Govt.	Ind/PP	-	2
Granada	Govt.	Ind	2	4
Logroño	Govt.	SD	-	3
Salamanca	Govt.	SD	2	4
Santander	Govt.	Ind	-	1
Zaragoza	Govt.	SD	3	3
Badajoz	Reg.	Reg	-	-
Cáceres	Reg.	Ind	1	3
Córdoba	Reg.	Reg	1	1
Coruña	Reg.	Reg	-	2



**Table 6.5. (cont.)**

Alicante	Coal.	Lib	1	1
Almería	Coal.	Ind	6	3
Huesca	Coal.	Ind	2	1
Cádiz	Coal.	SD	-	-
Málaga	Coal.	Ind	1	1
Melilla	Coal.	PP	-	2
Murcia	Coal.	Ind	-	1
Navarra	Coal.	SD	-	4
Orense	Coal.	PP	-	2
Oviedo	Coal.	Ind	7	2
Palencia	Coal.	DC	10	4
Palma de Mallorca	Coal.	Ind	1	2
Tenerife	Coal.	Lib	5	6
Teruel	Coal.	Ind	3	4
Valladolid	Coal.	Ind	3	4
Valencia	Coal.	Ind	6	5
Guadalajara	Coal.	DC	3	5
Madrid	Govt./Coal.	Ind	14	11
Albacete	Negot.	PP	6	-
Gran Canaria	Negot.	Ind	4	4
Toledo	Negot.	Ind	-	1
Castellón	Negot.	Ind	-	-
Ciudad Real	Negot.	Ind	-	2
Sevilla	Negot.	SD	1	2
Soria	Negot.	SD	-	3
Zamora	Negot.	Ind	-	5
Guipúzcoa	-	DC	-	2

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## **APPENDIX**

### **Primary sources used in the research**

#### **1. Interview data**

A fundamental source for this research were the interviews with national and provincial UCD leaders carried out by Professor Richard Gunther in 1978, 1979, 1981 and 1983. Professor Gunther generously made the transcripts of these interviews available, providing an invaluable source of information and interpretation of the organisation of the party. Since the respondents were promised total anonymity, the interviews are referred to according to the codes used by Professor Gunther (eg. A1, C34). As far as the interviews of local elites are concerned, the choice of provinces was made in terms of demographic and socio-economic variables, in order to obtain a sample representative of Spanish reality. All the respondents held some position of political authority in the party - usually gerente, provincial secretary, organisational secretary or deputy for the province in question. It goes without saying that the interpretation of the data is the author's, and that only he is responsible for the shortcomings of this analysis.

The following interviews involved members of the UCD national elite - ministers, parliamentarians, or senior officials in the party apparatus: A7, A9, A37, B1, B2, B4, B41, C31, C32, C34, C36, C41, C43, C44, C46, C65, D1.

The following interviews involved local UCD leaders - usually the provincial secretary or gerente: 16, 23, 30, 33, 36, 41, 54, 61.

A smaller sample of interview data was collected by the author between 1992 and 1993. The author would like to thank the following interviewees for generously giving their time and providing unique insights into the problems studied in this thesis: Oscar Alzaga, Rafael Arias

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## 2. Other sources

A number of published UCD documents have been used in this thesis. However, the availability of internal party documents is quite unsatisfactory, principally because the party archive was apparently destroyed some time after the UCD's dissolution. Some internal documents have been reproduced in published works, often the memoirs of party elite members, or in the press. However it has proved impossible to base this study on such sources, hence the emphasis on subjective accounts of events in the form of interviews and autobiographical works.

Another important source is the press. Newspapers such as El País and Diario 16, and weeklies such as Cambio 16 and Triunfo have proved useful sources of information, whose reliability in many cases was confirmed by other sources. El País has been taken as the basic journalistic source; Diario 16 has been used in particular for the study of the "critical movement", who used the paper as a means of publicising their views. Other newspapers, such as Ya and ABC, have been used sparingly, mainly because of time constraints.













